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Kanner et al.

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[54] **NON-BUBBLE FORMING DROPPER TIP**

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[22] Filed: **Apr. 22, 1998**

[51] Int. Cl.⁷ **B65D 37/00**

[52] U.S. Cl. **222/212; 222/420**

[58] Field of Search **222/212, 420,
222/421, 422**

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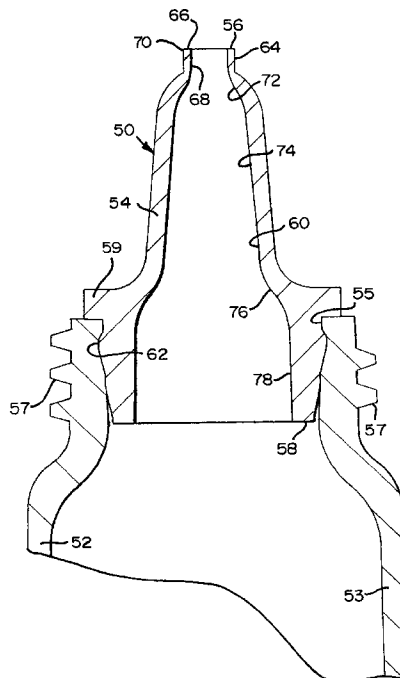
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Primary Examiner—Joseph A. Kaufman
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Trexler, Bushnell, Giangiorgi & Blackstone, Ltd.

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A dropper tip which is adapted to be connected to a container for dispensing fluid, such as medications and like, from the container includes a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough. The inner wall smoothly diverges and gradually increases in inner diameter from the first end to the second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped along the inner wall. The inner wall is highly polished and may be made of olefinic material, silicone rubber material, or fluorocarbon, including, but not limited to, polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), carbon tetrafluoroethylene (CTFE), fluoroethylene propylene (FEP) or the like, to resist fluid wetting, facilitate fluid detachment therefrom and to reduce fluid film thickness therealong. The surface of the inner wall is smoothed to minimize surface roughness. A tubular portion having a flat end surface is provided at the first end of the body to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from the dropper tip. A sharp perimeter edge is provided by the flat end surface to provide an instant transition to discourage fluid wetting and migration beyond the designated perimeter of the flat end surface. A novel cap is provided for sealing the dropper tip from contaminants.

41 Claims, 22 Drawing Sheets



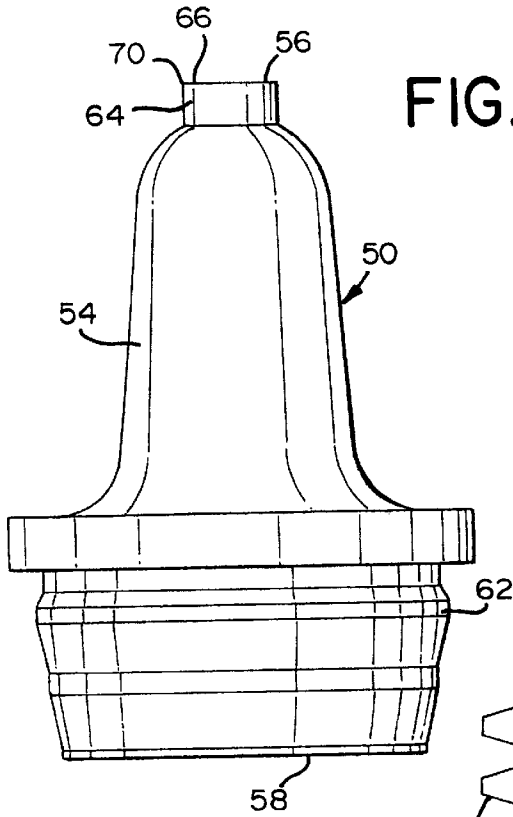


FIG. 1

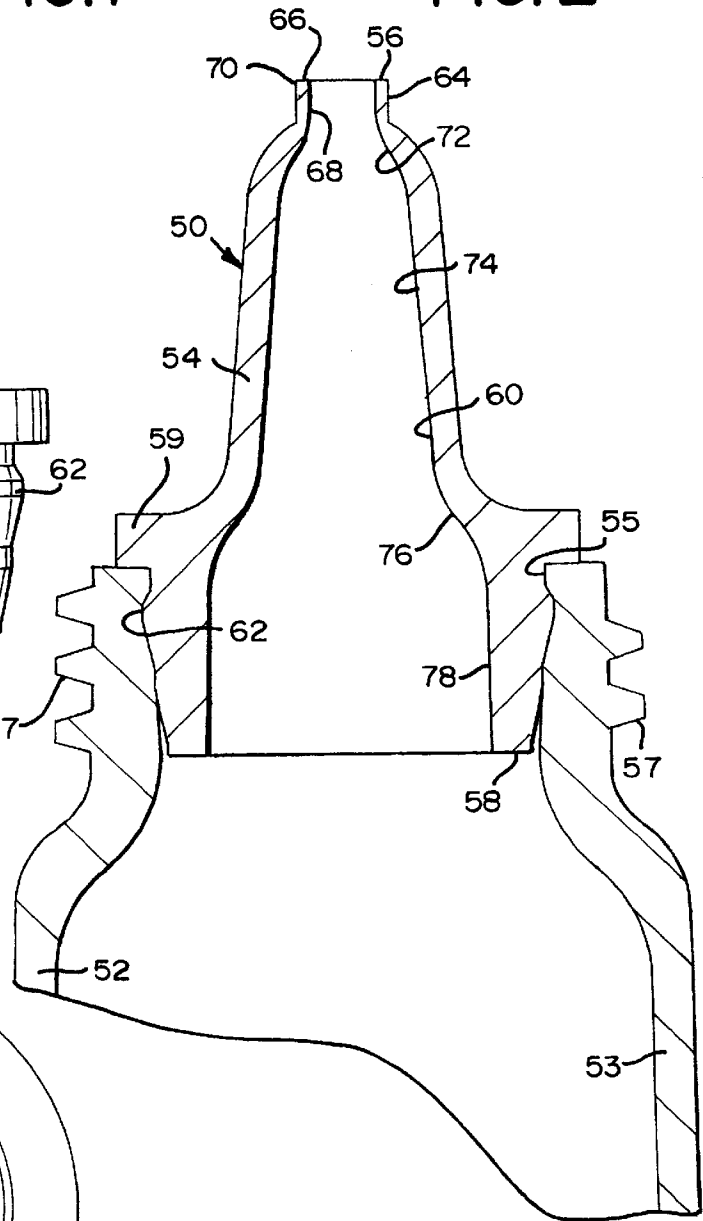


FIG. 2

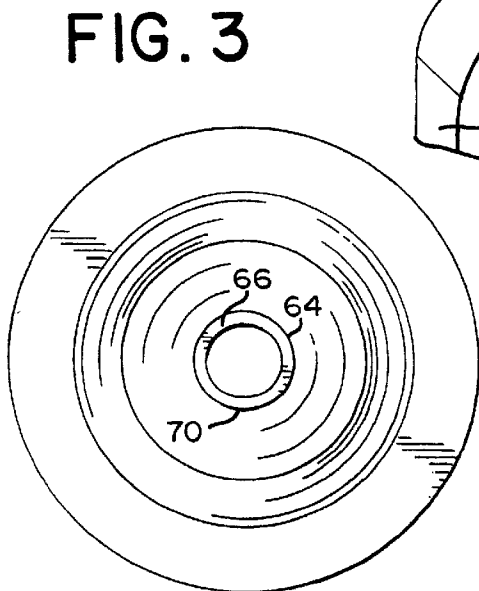


FIG. 3

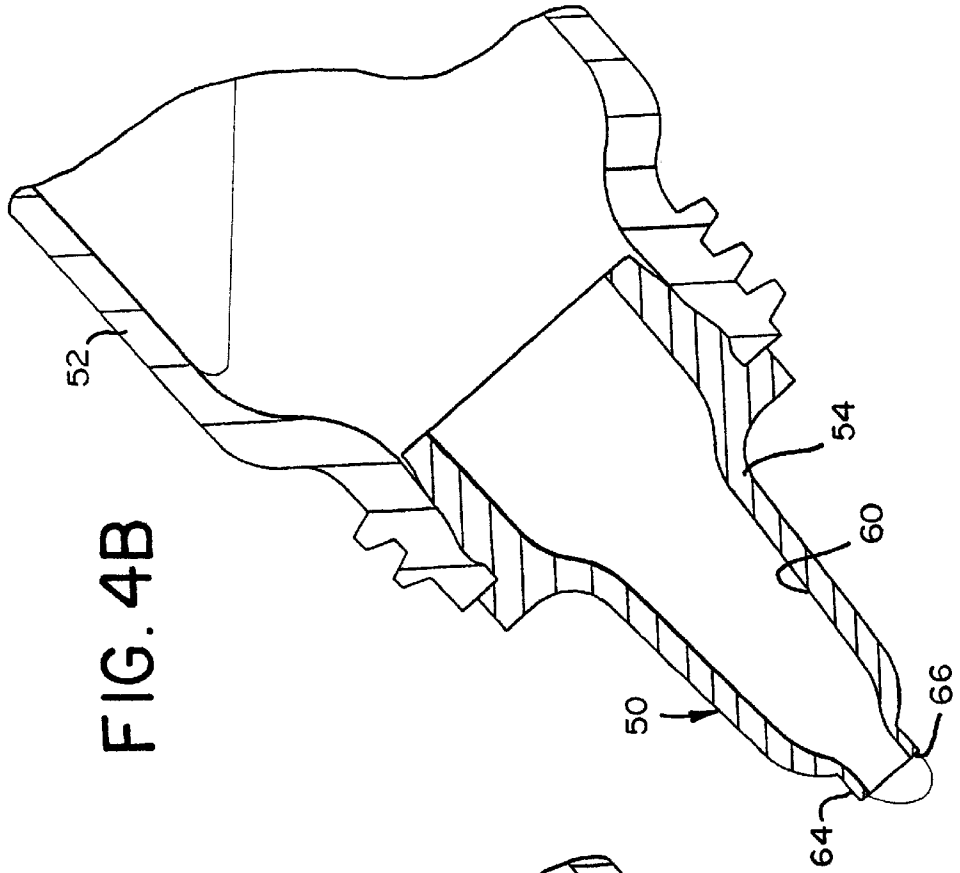


FIG. 4B

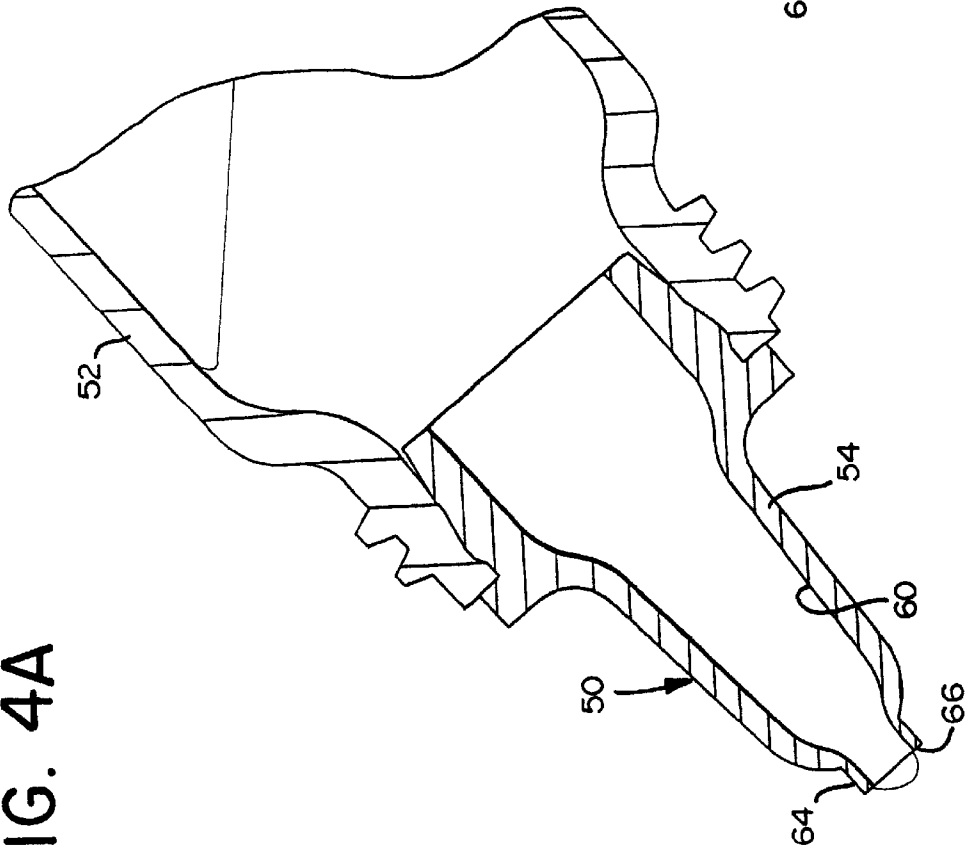


FIG. 4A

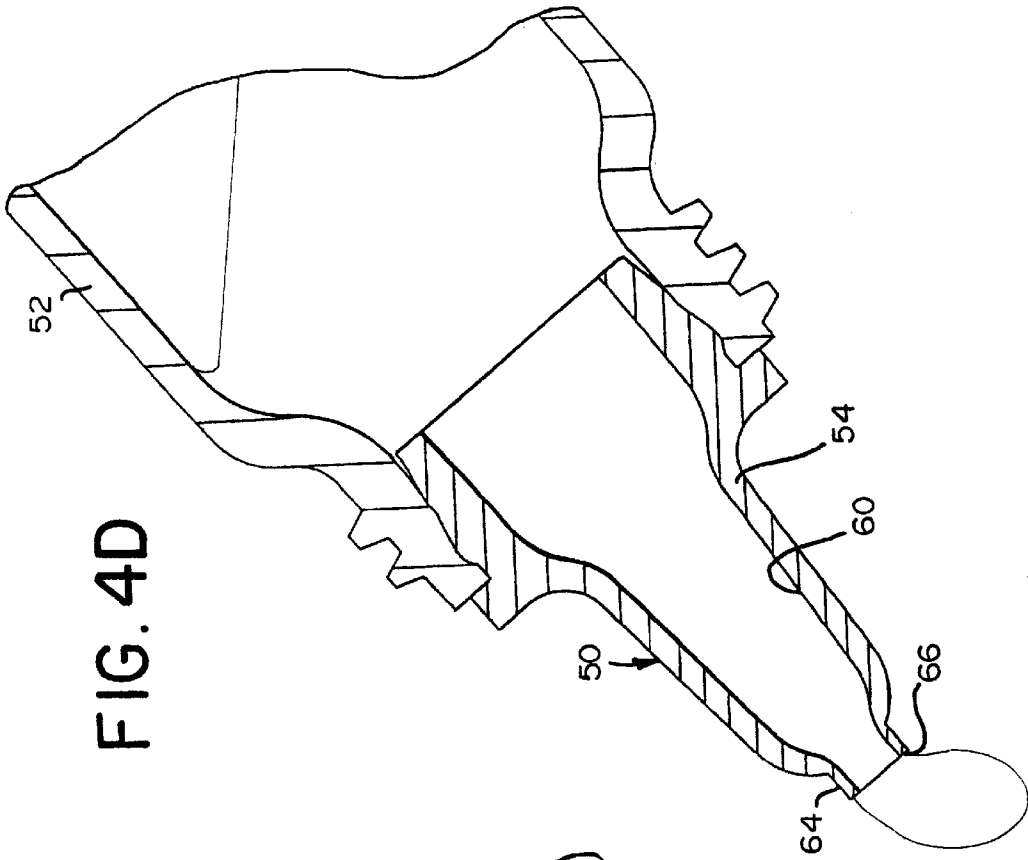


FIG. 4D

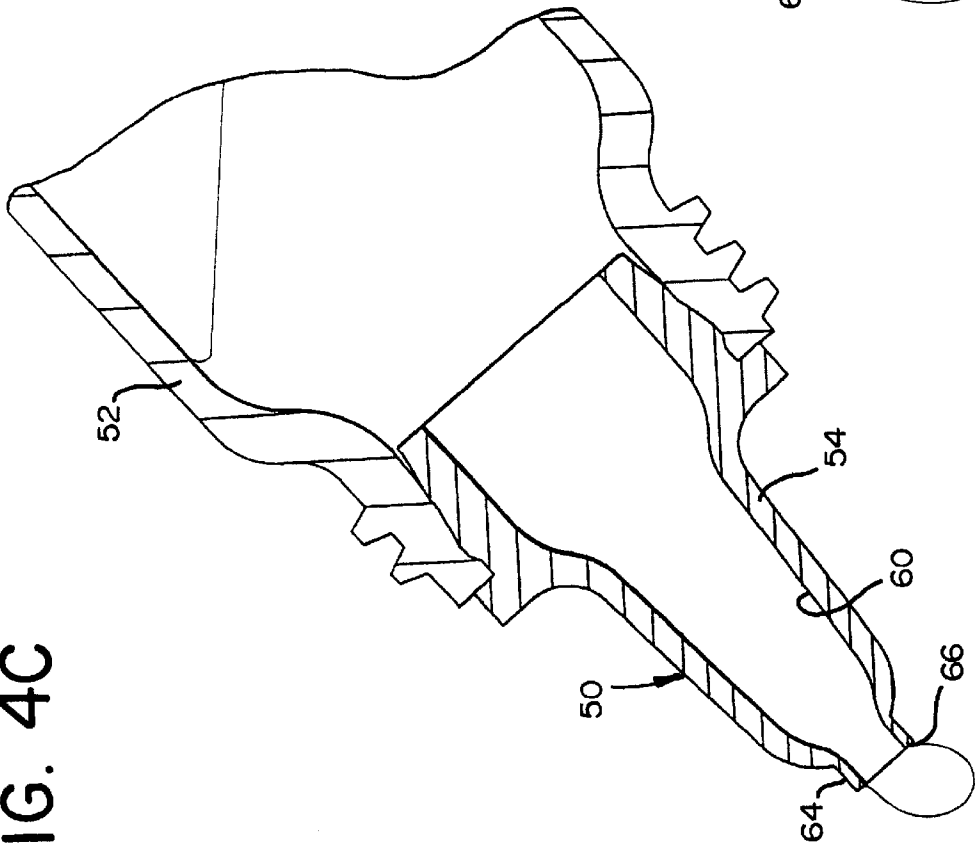


FIG. 4C

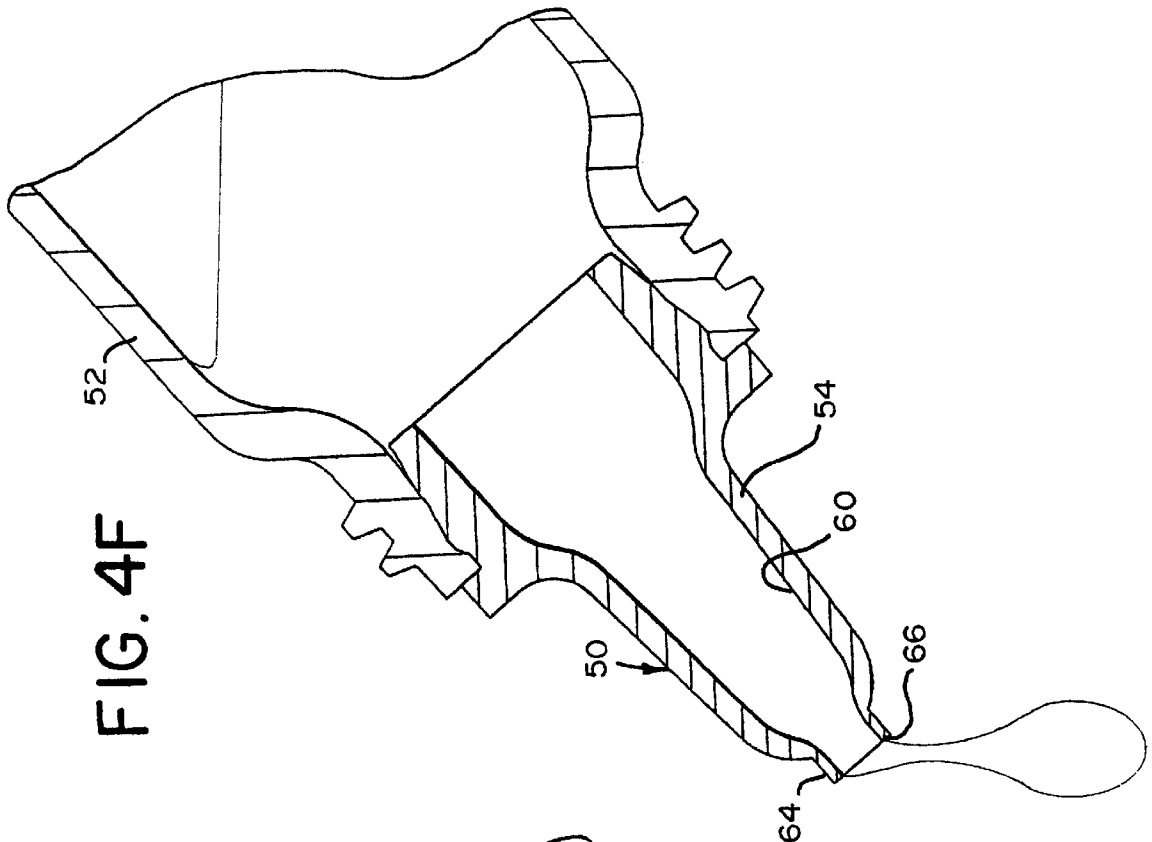


FIG. 4F

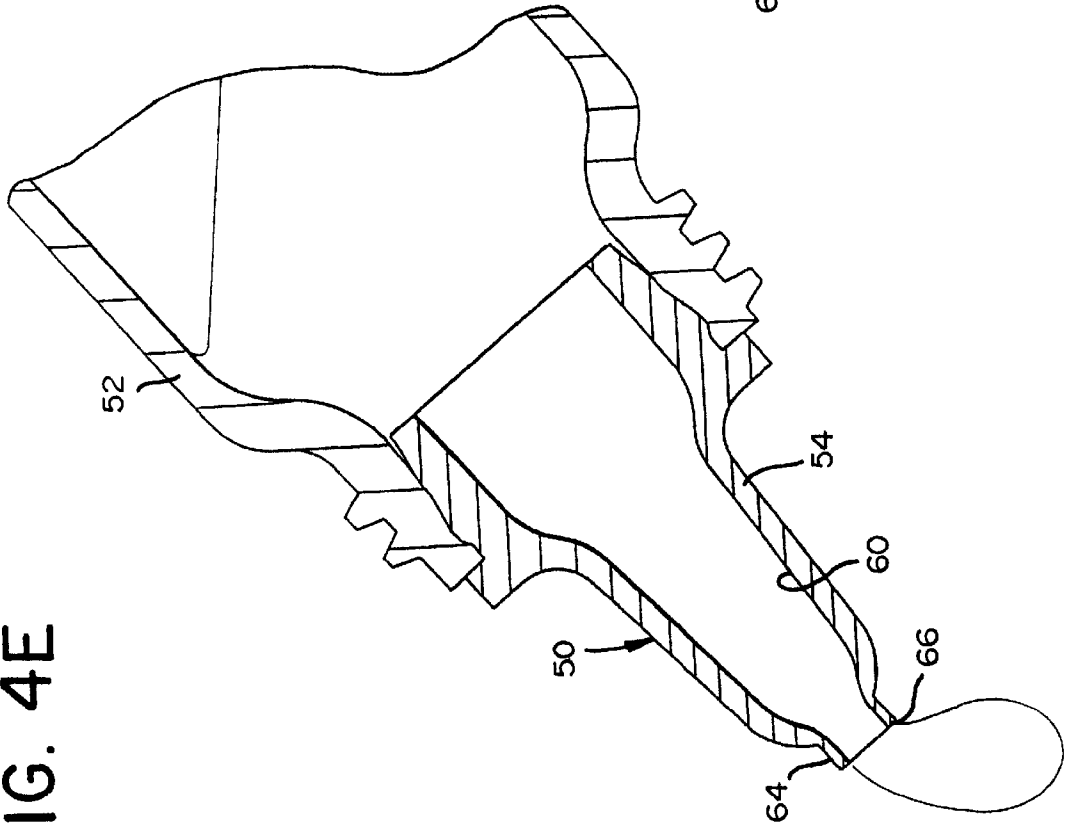


FIG. 4E

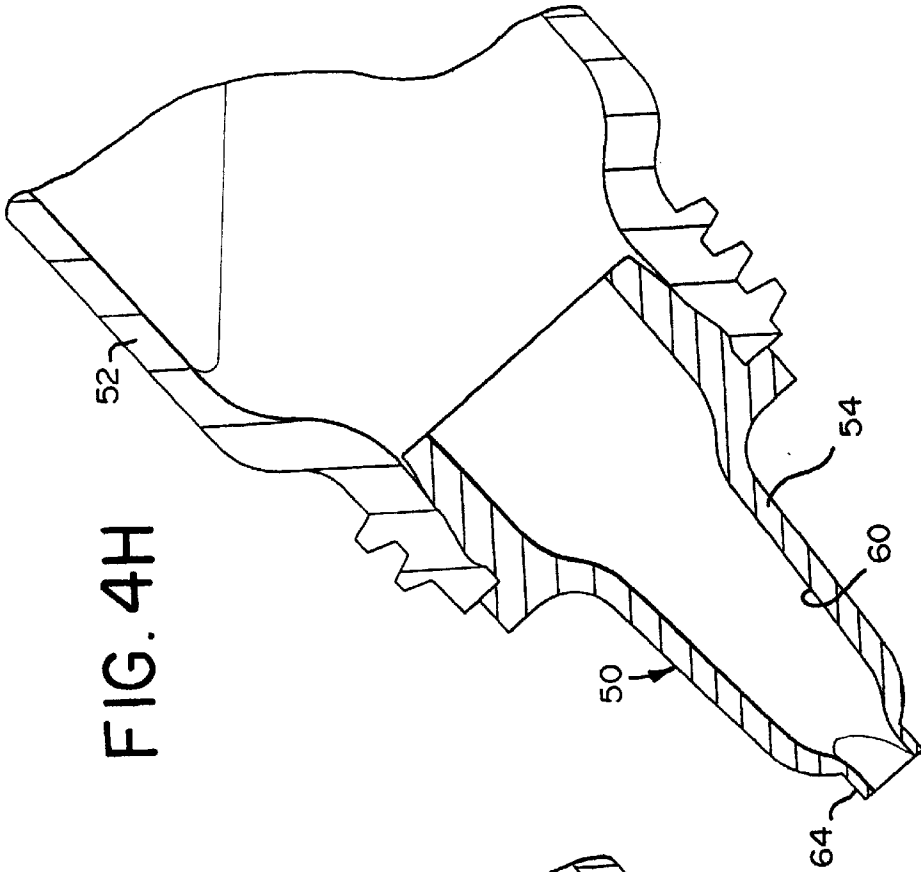


FIG. 4H

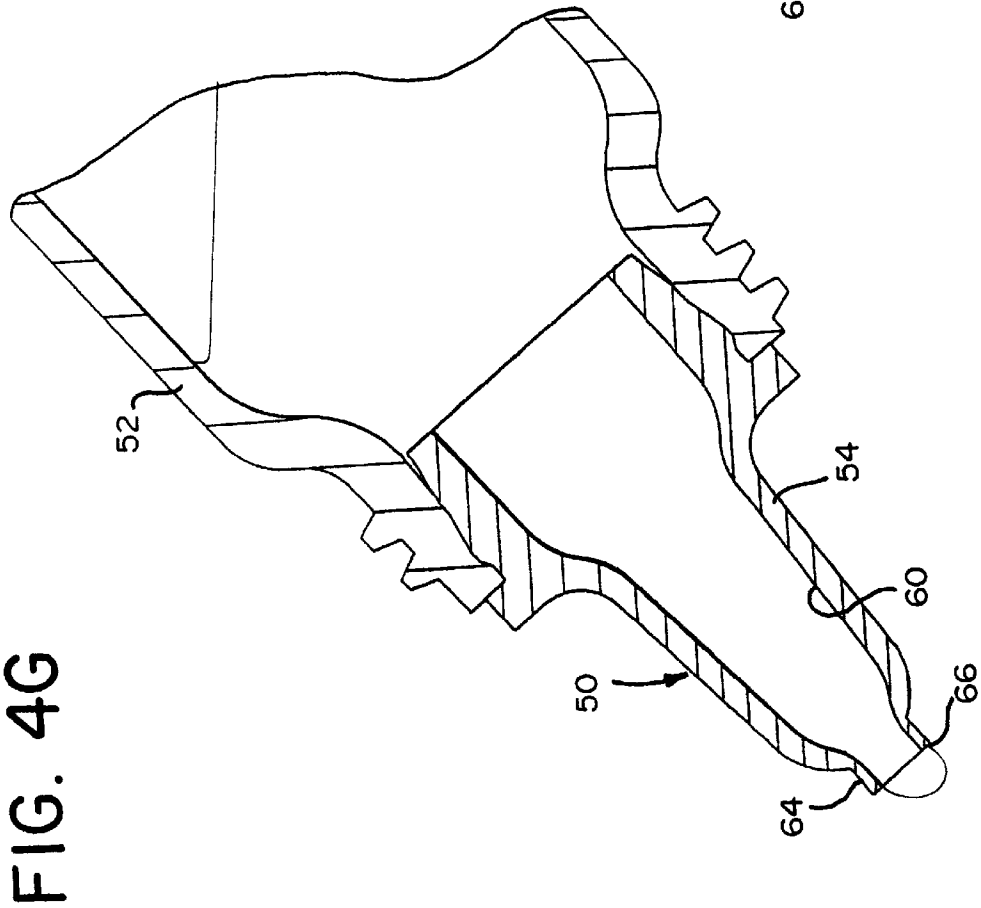


FIG. 4G

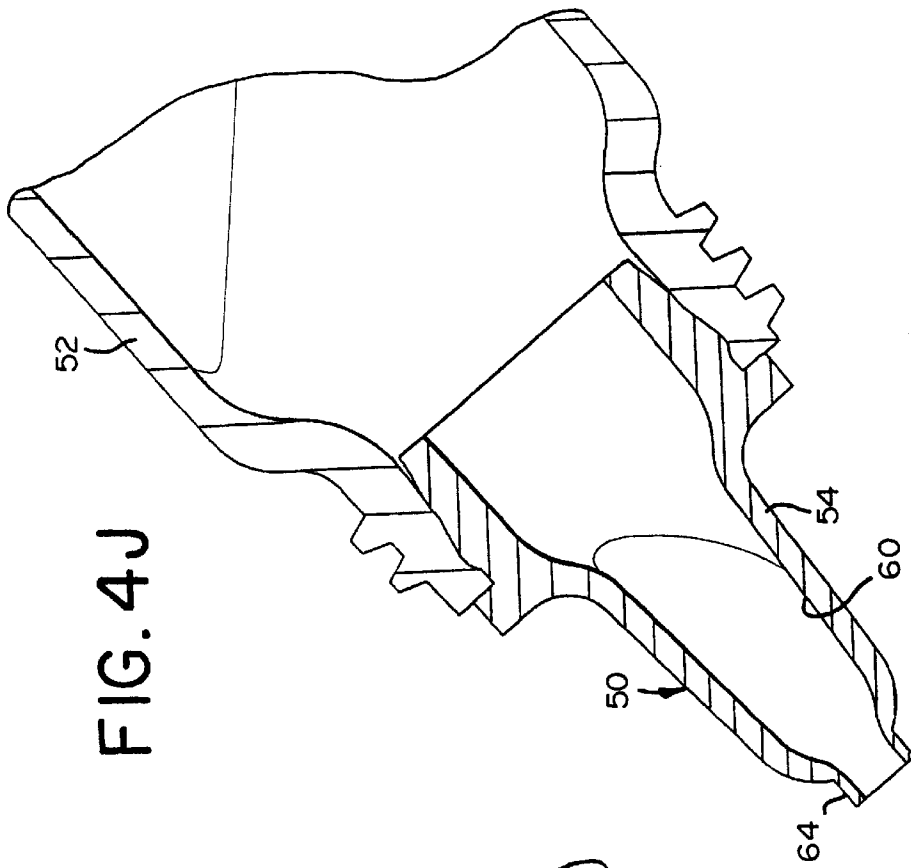


FIG. 4J

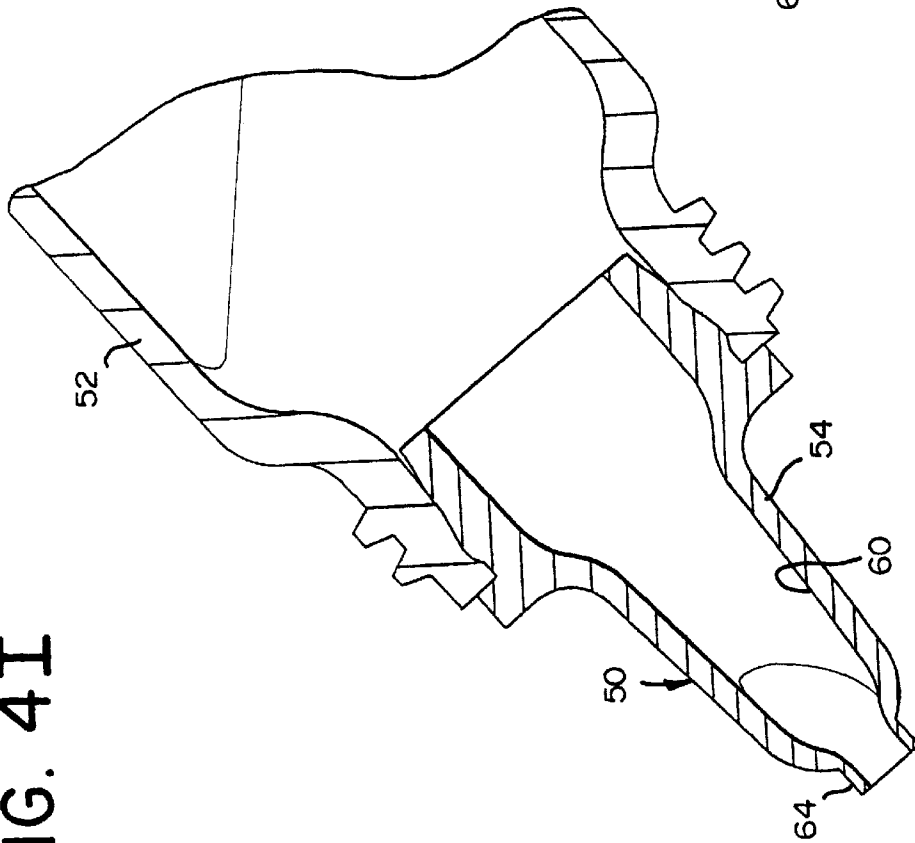


FIG. 4I

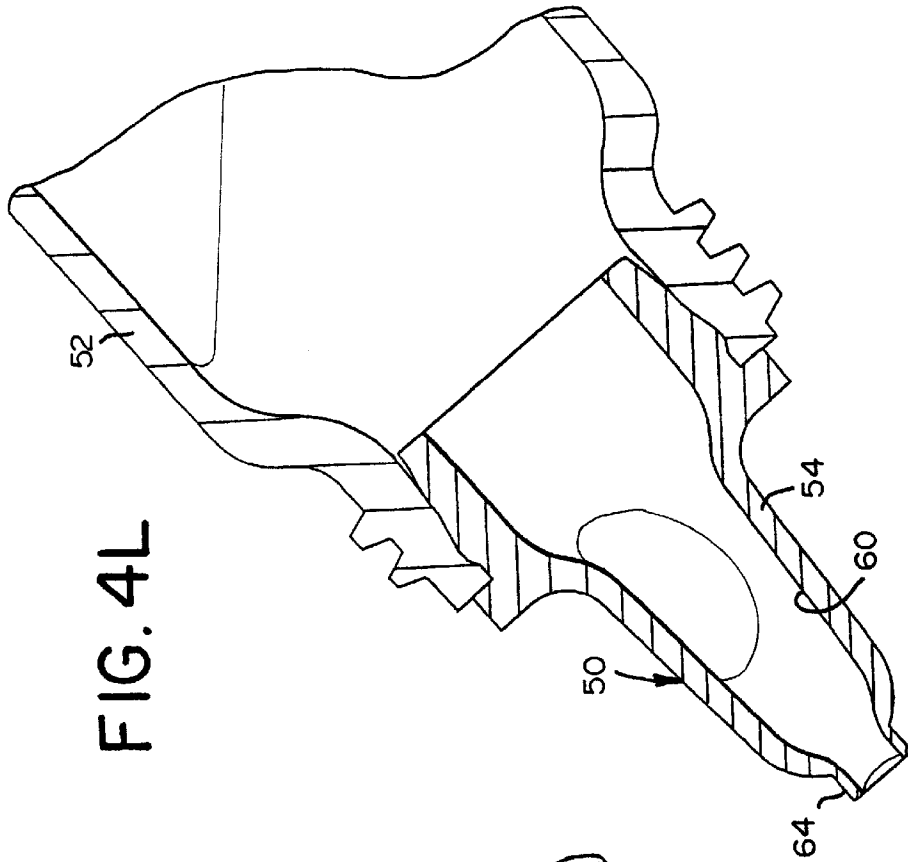


FIG. 4L

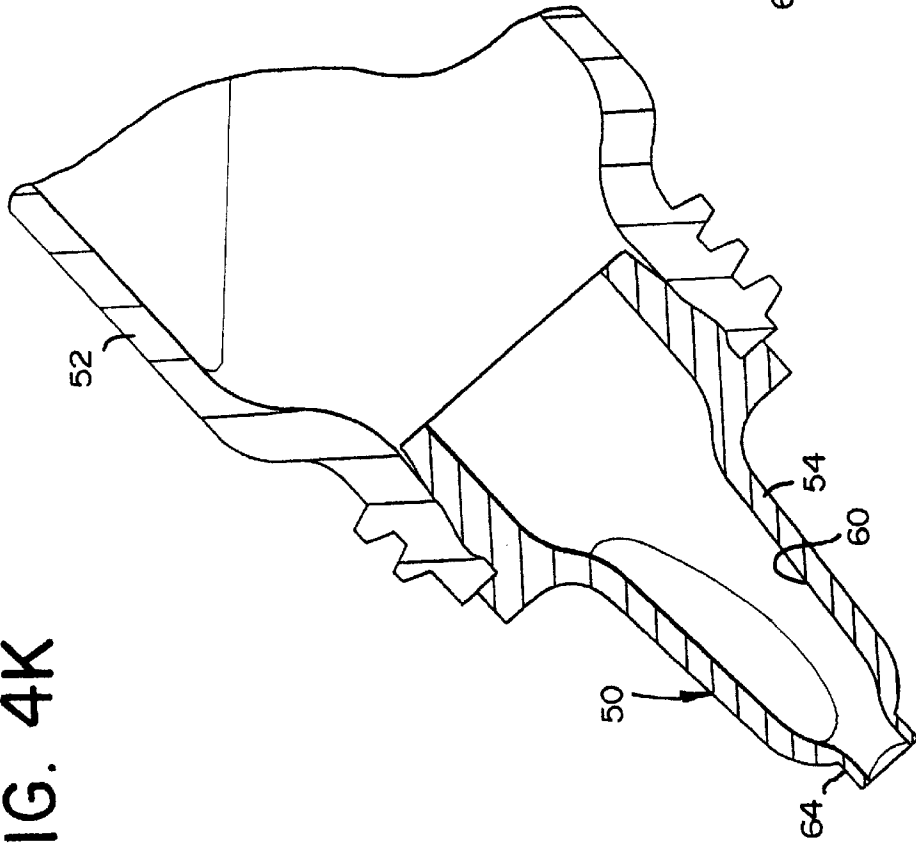
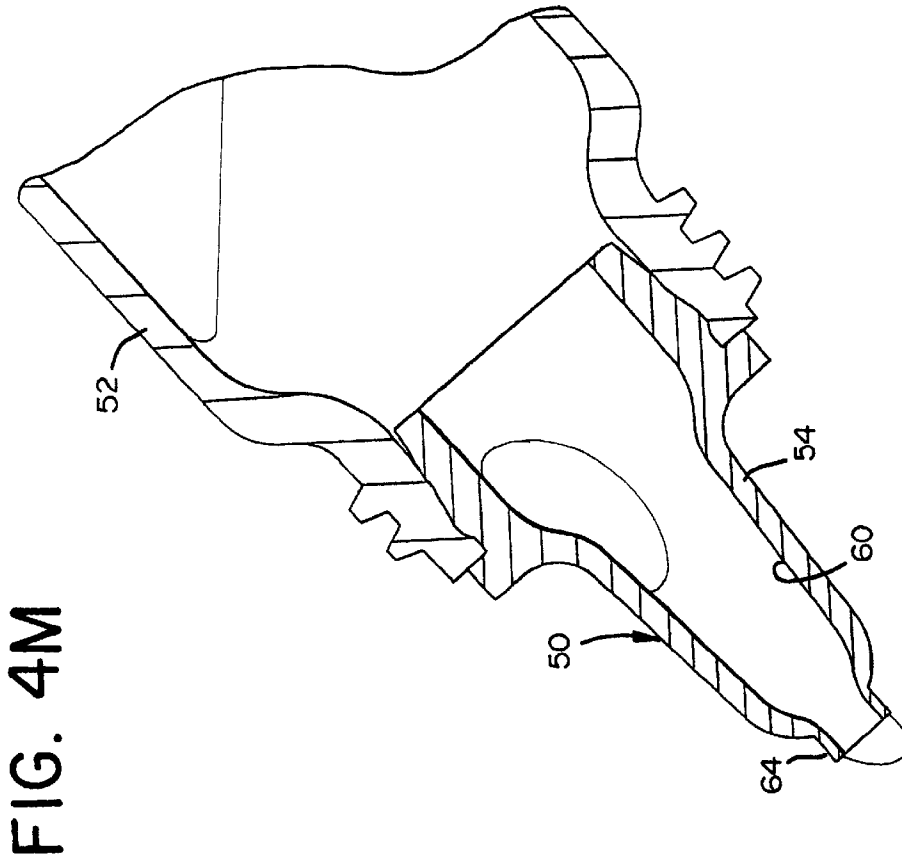
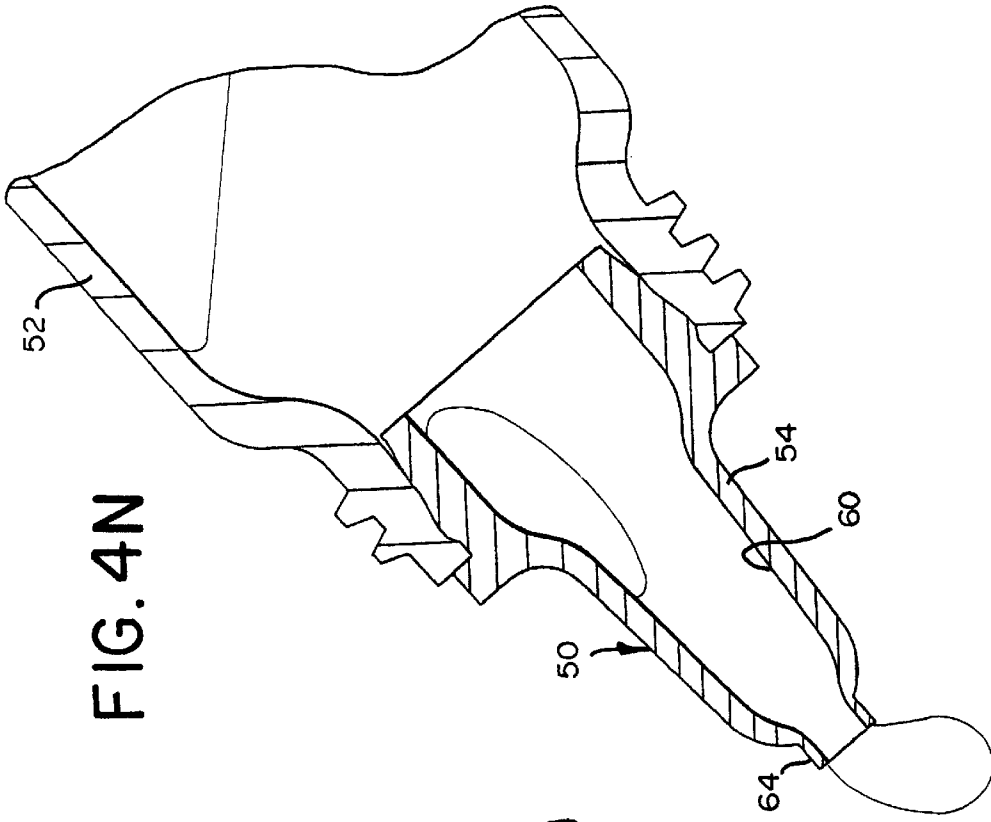


FIG. 4K



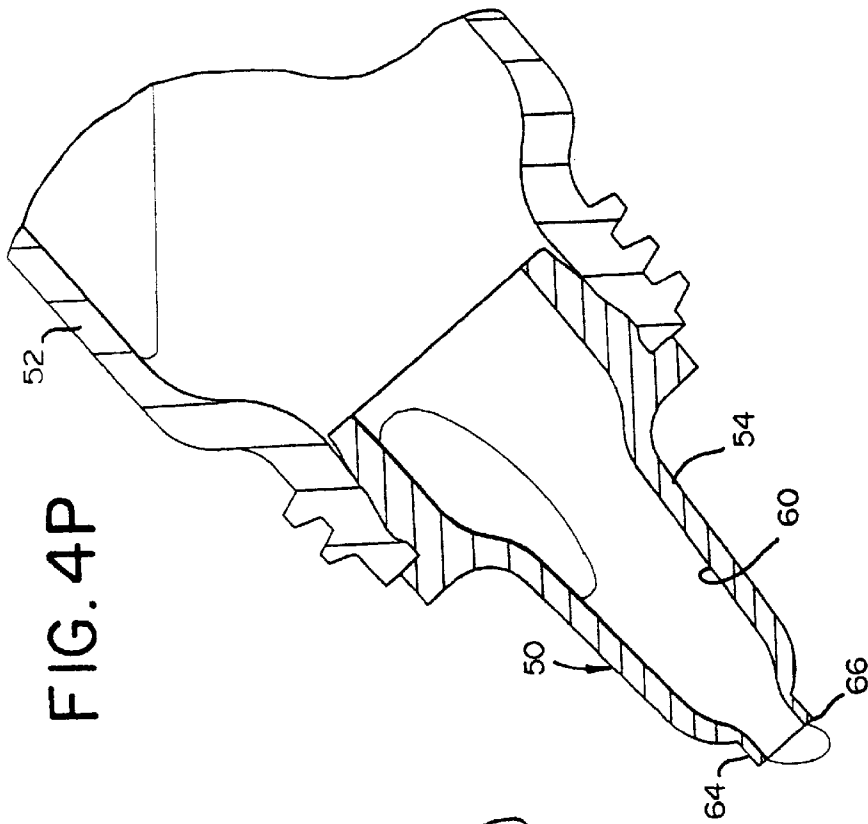


FIG. 40P

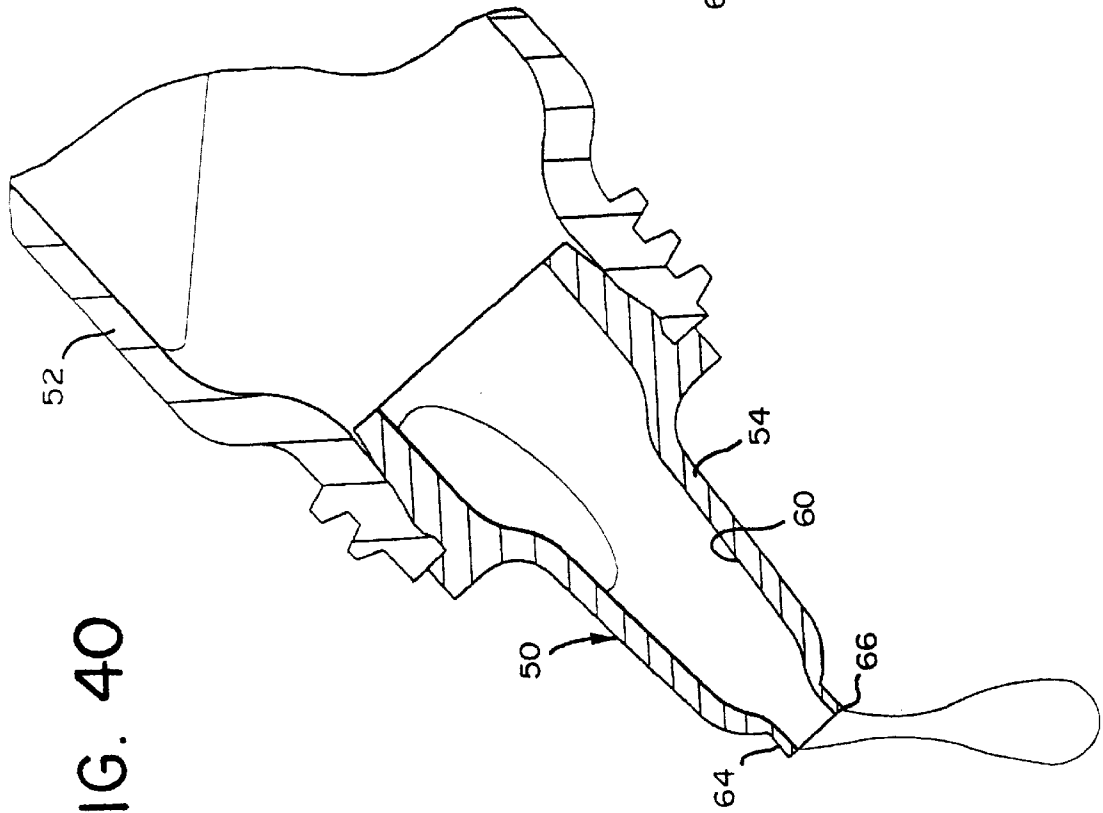


FIG. 40

FIG. 4R

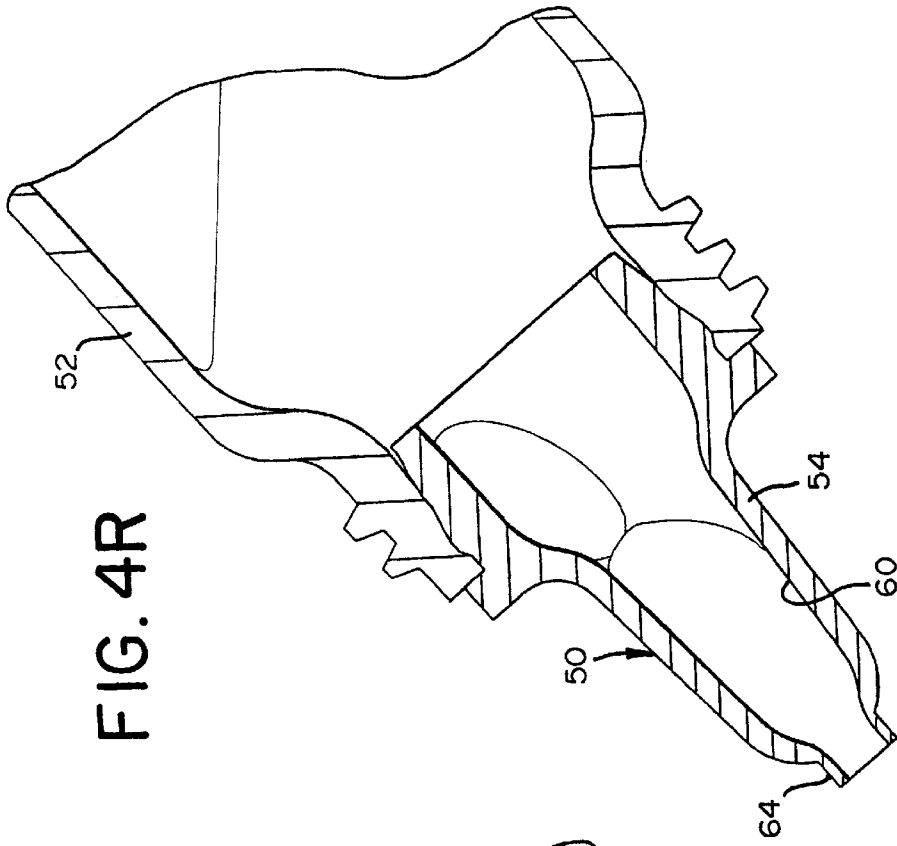
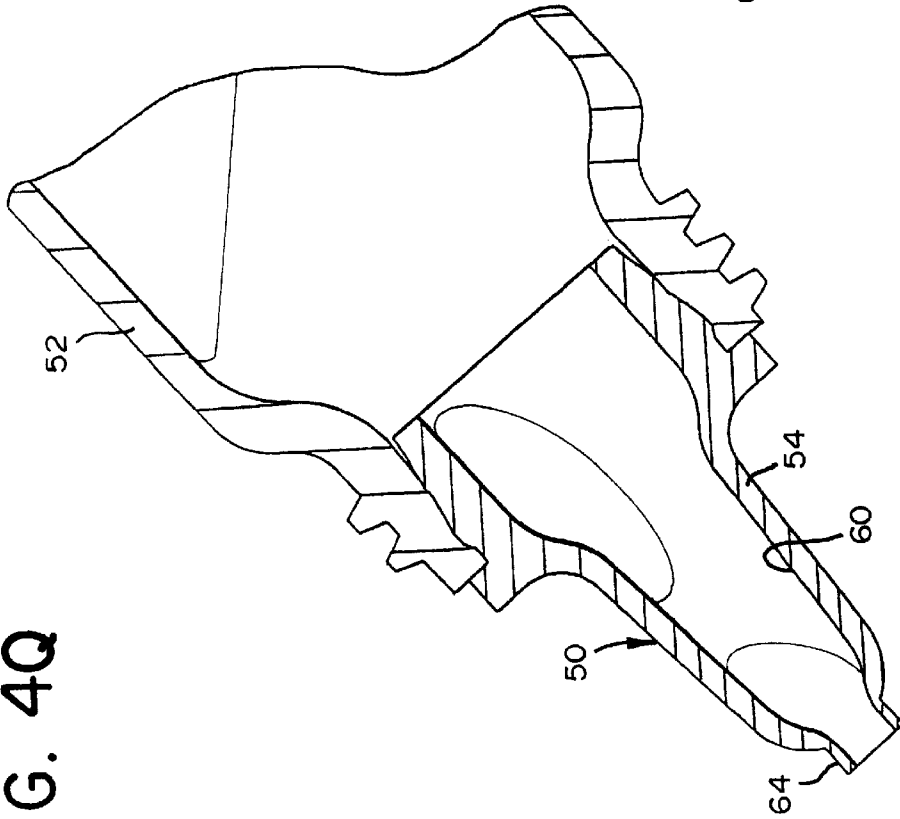
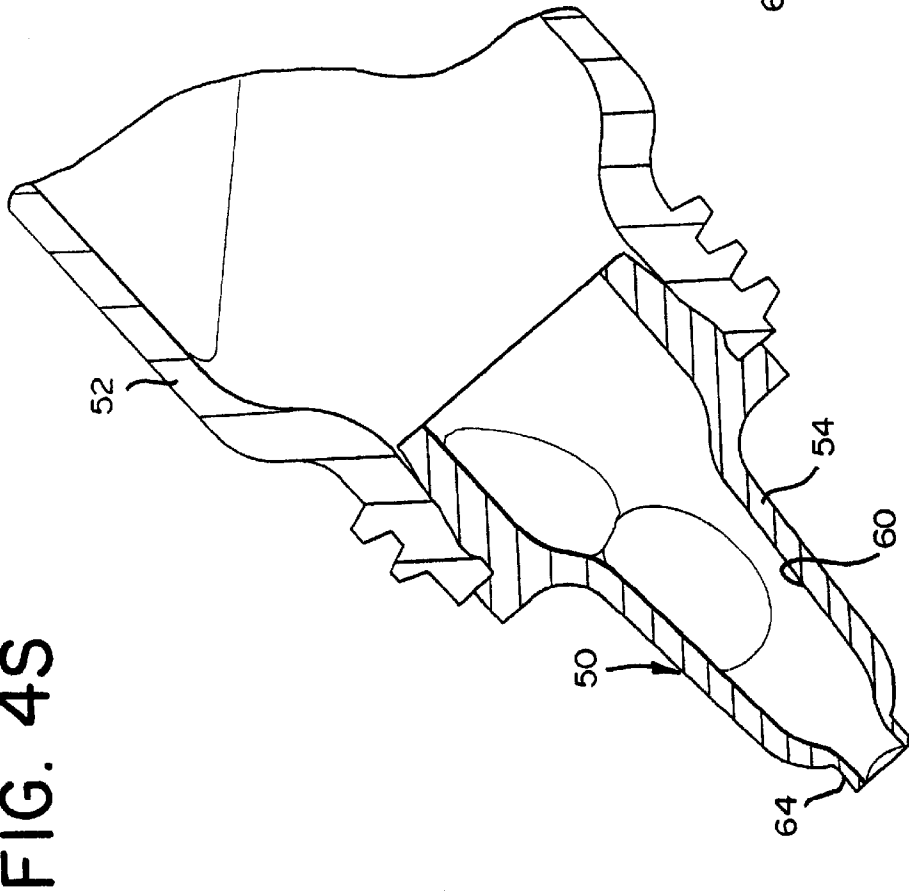
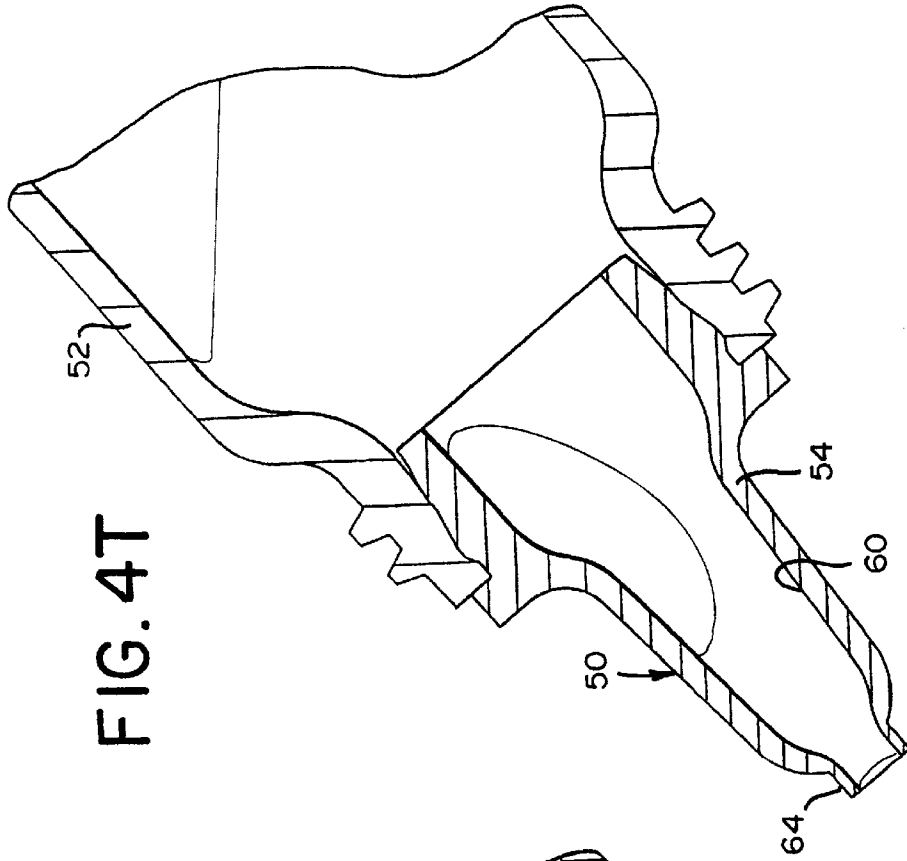


FIG. 4Q





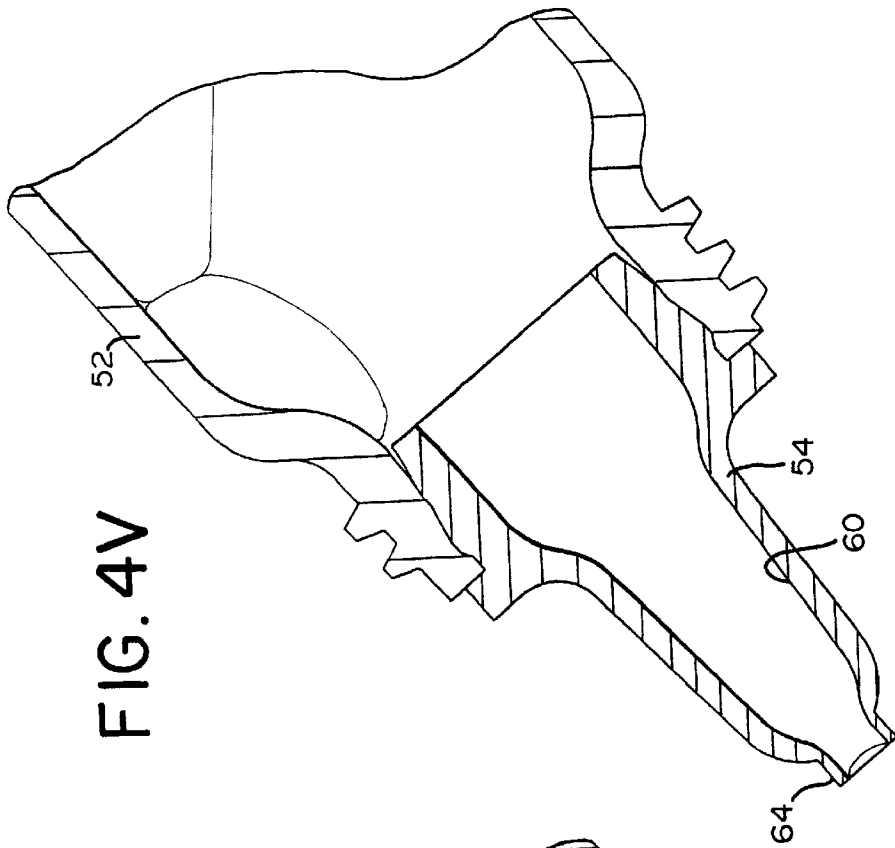


FIG. 4V

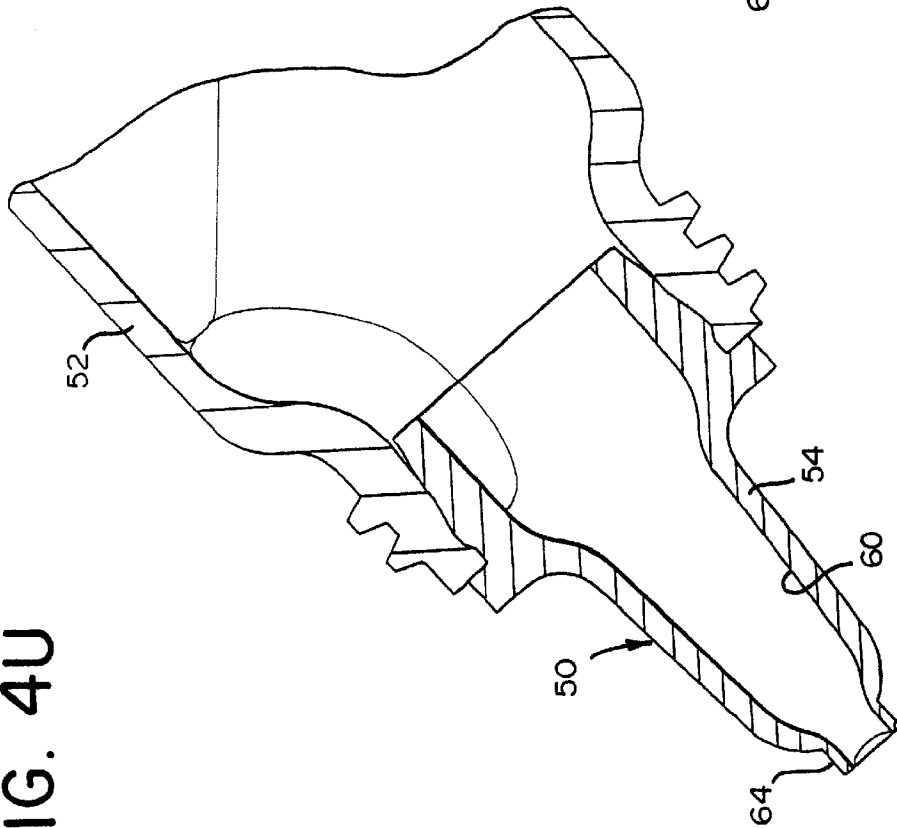


FIG. 4U

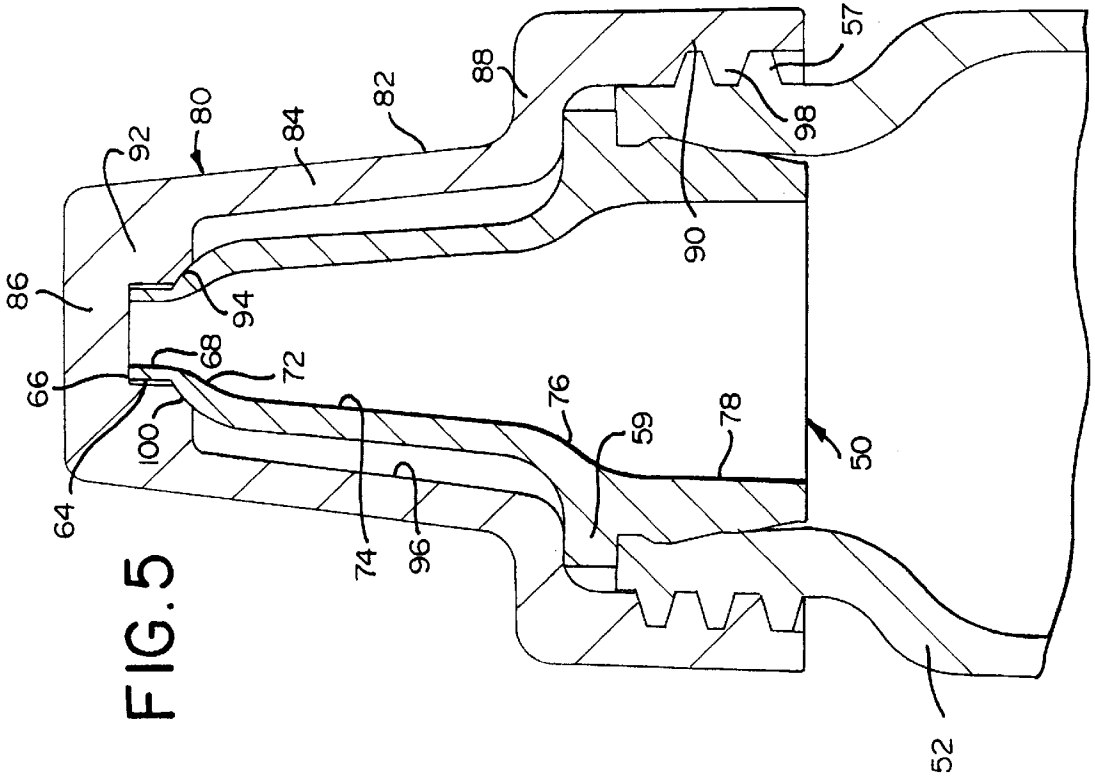


FIG. 5

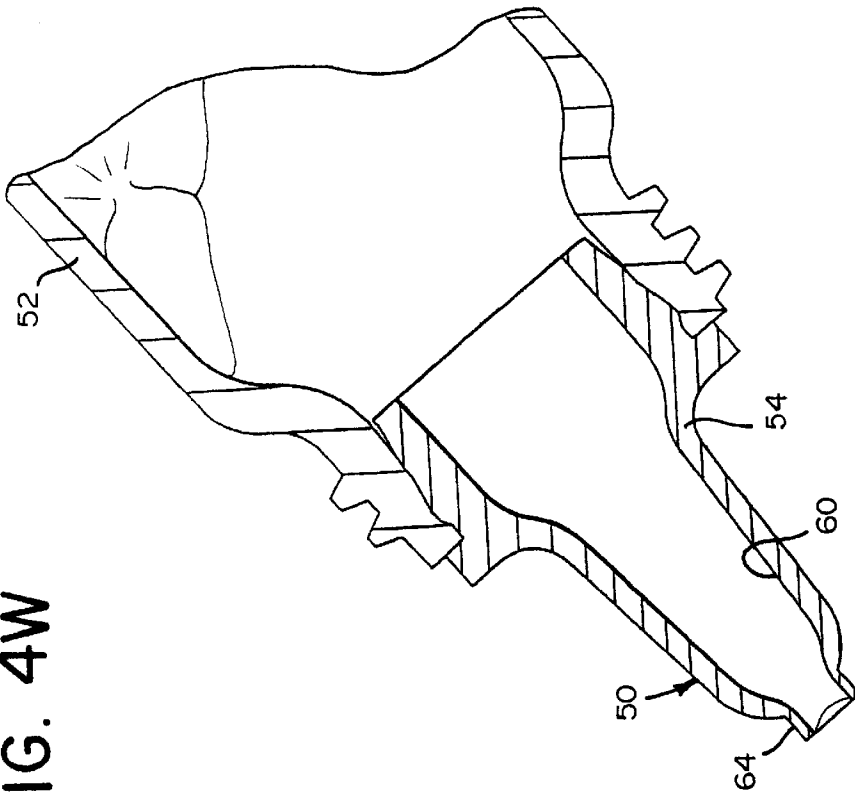
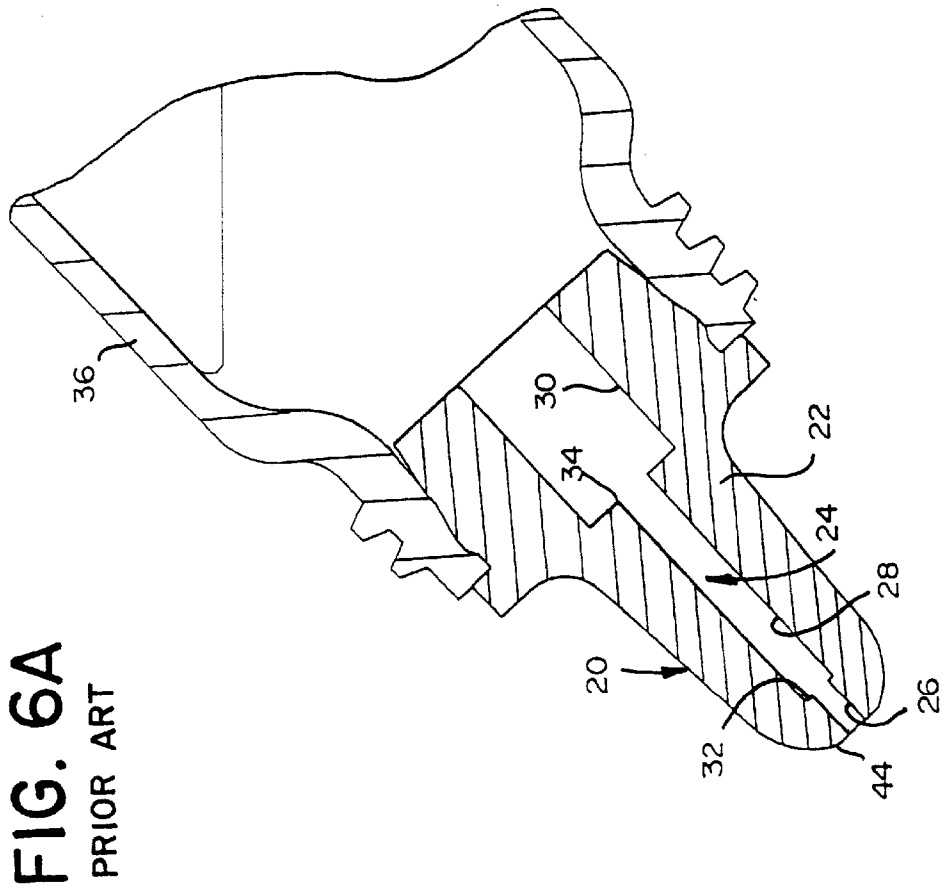
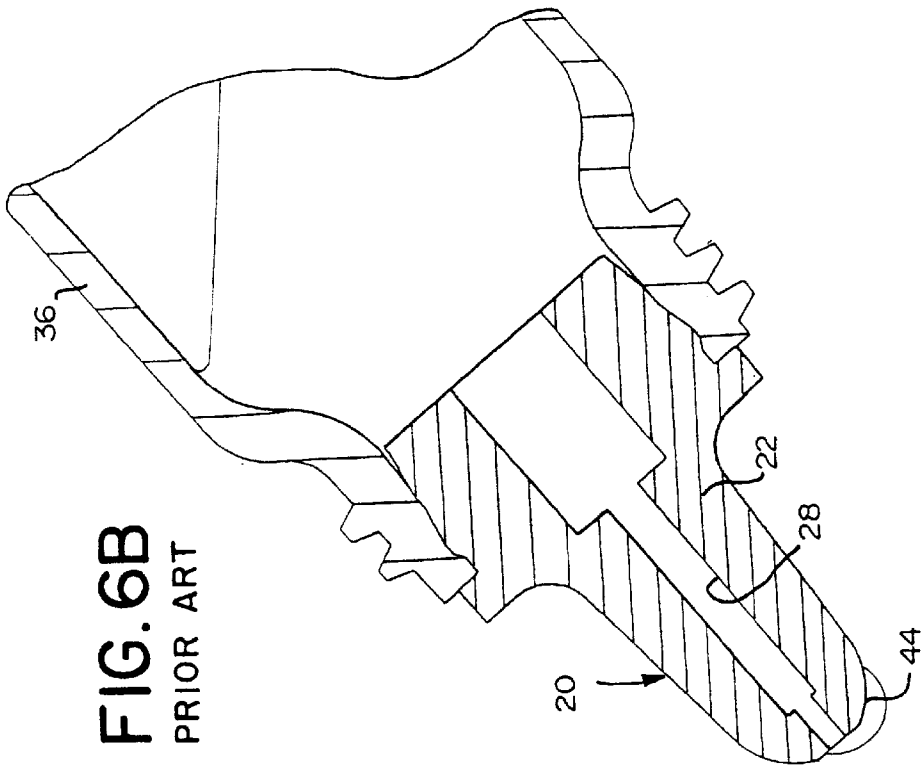


FIG. 4W



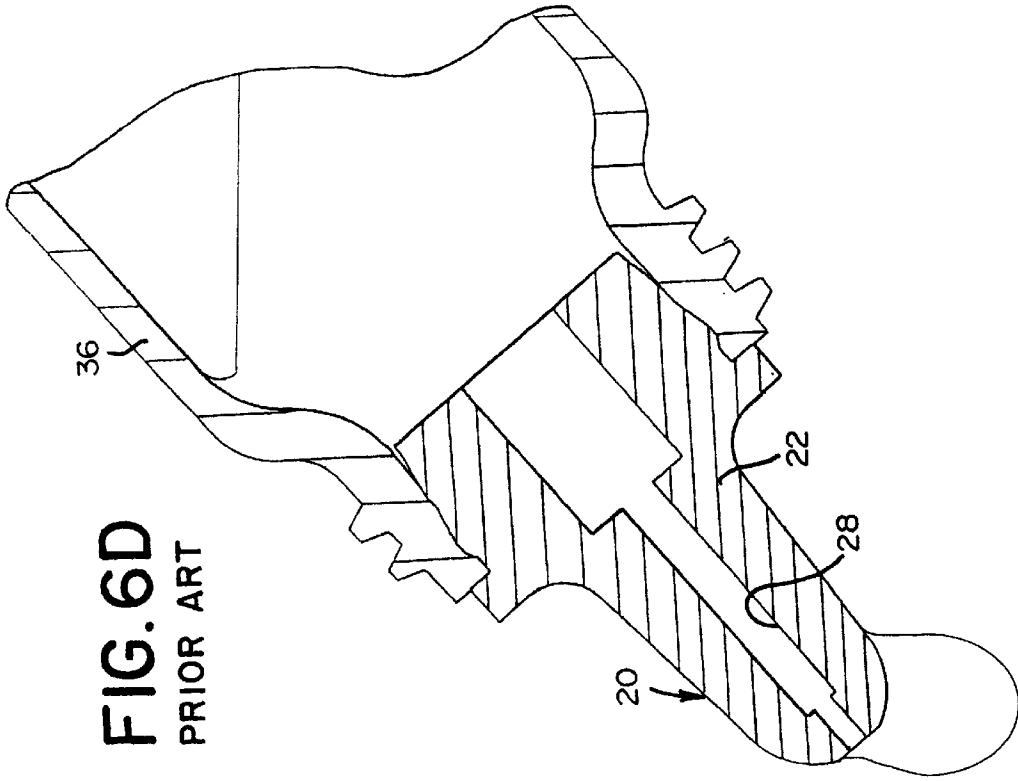


FIG. 6D
PRIOR ART

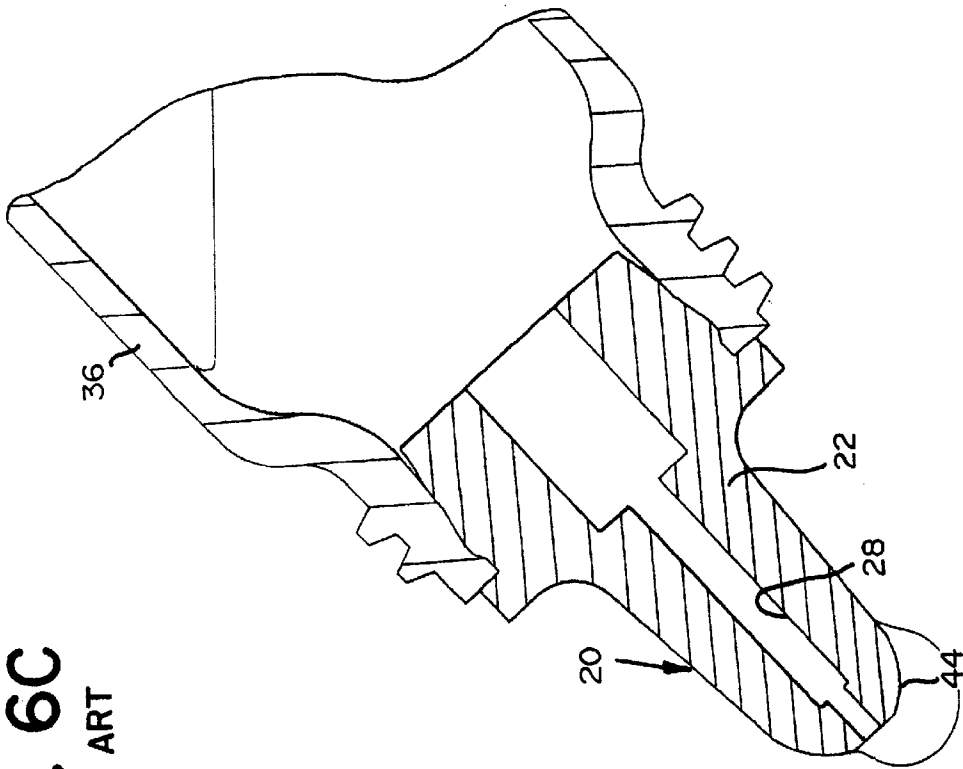


FIG. 6C
PRIOR ART

FIG. 6F
PRIOR ART

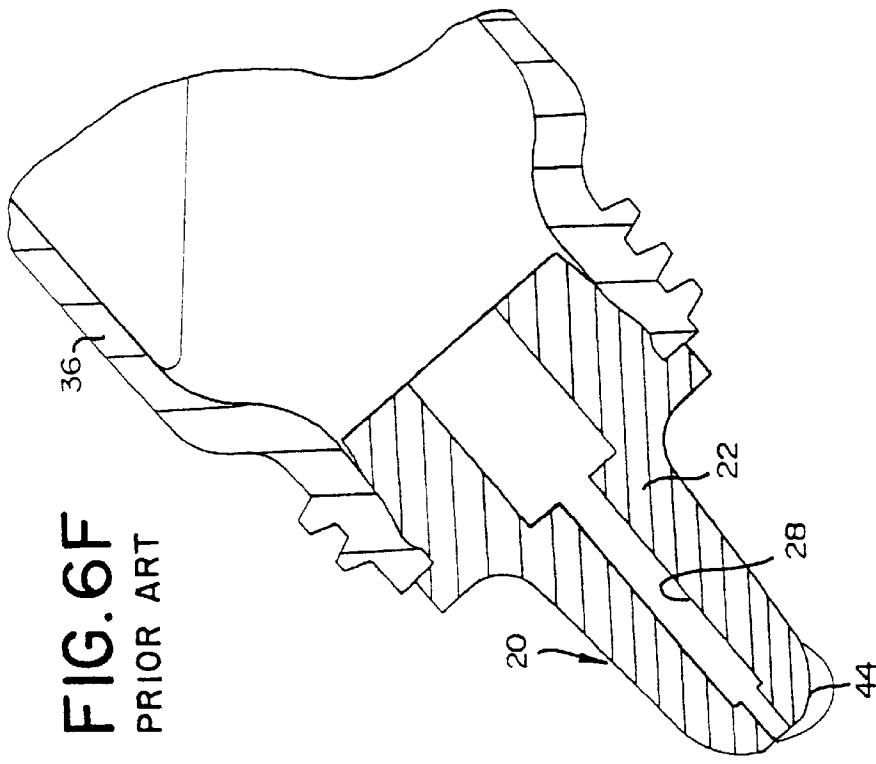
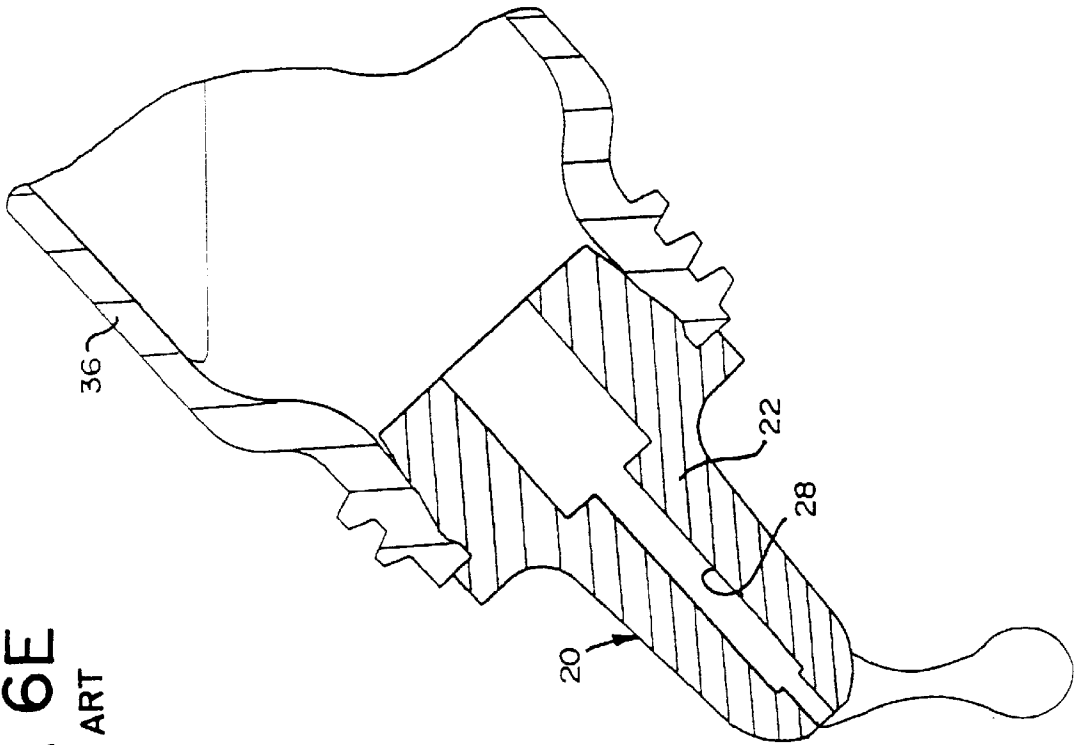


FIG. 6E
PRIOR ART



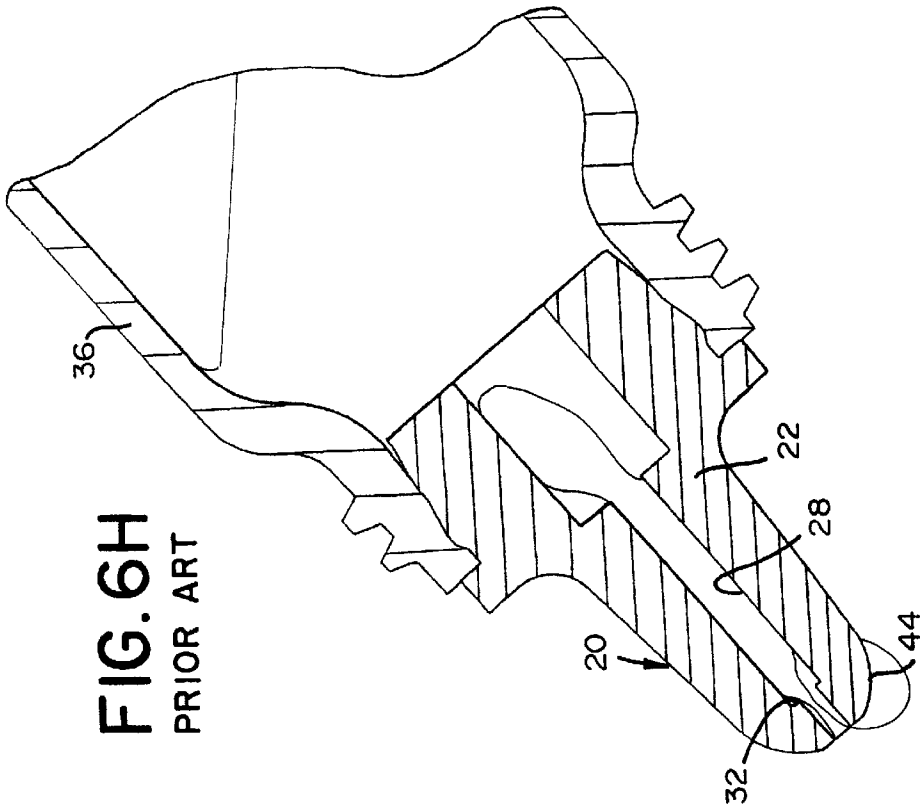


FIG. 6H
PRIOR ART

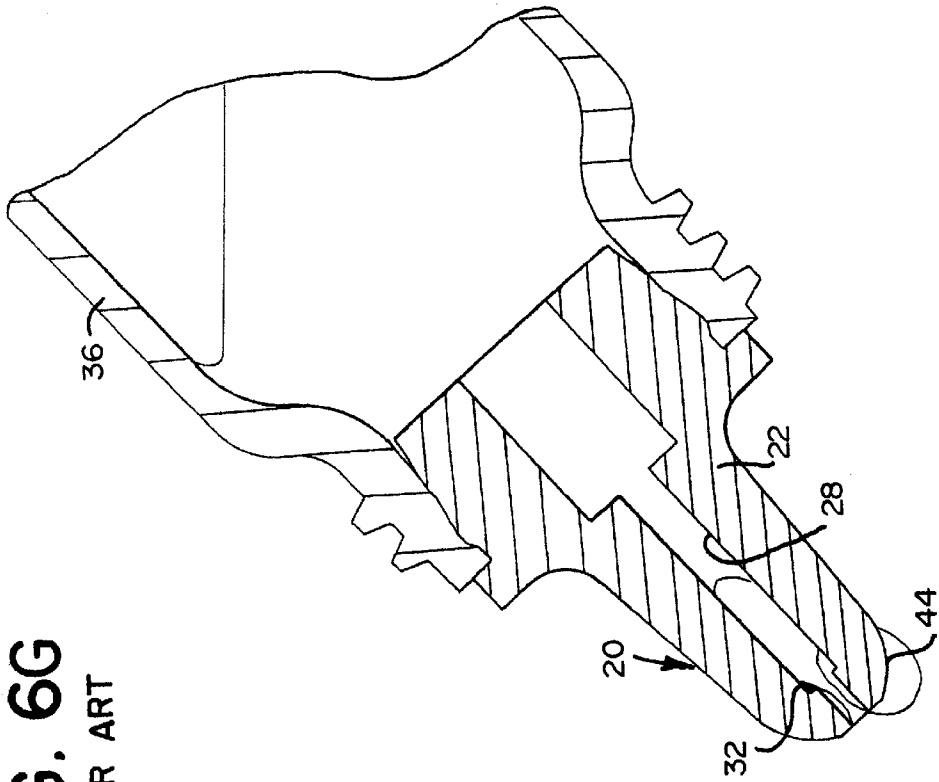


FIG. 6G
PRIOR ART

FIG. 6I
PRIOR ART

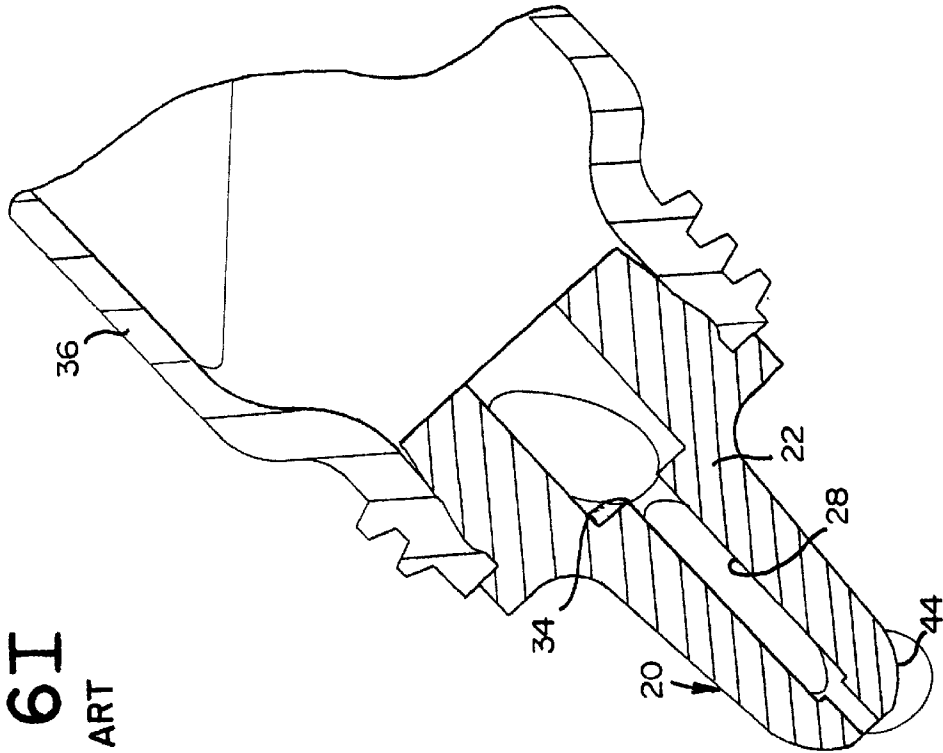
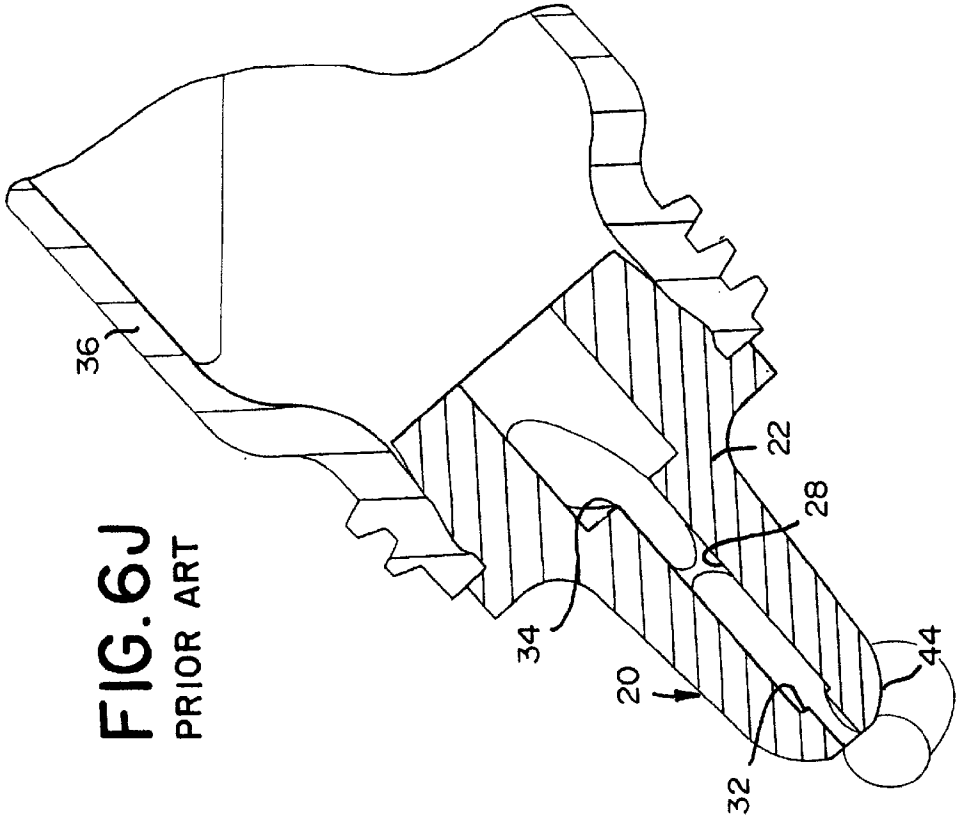


FIG. 6J
PRIOR ART



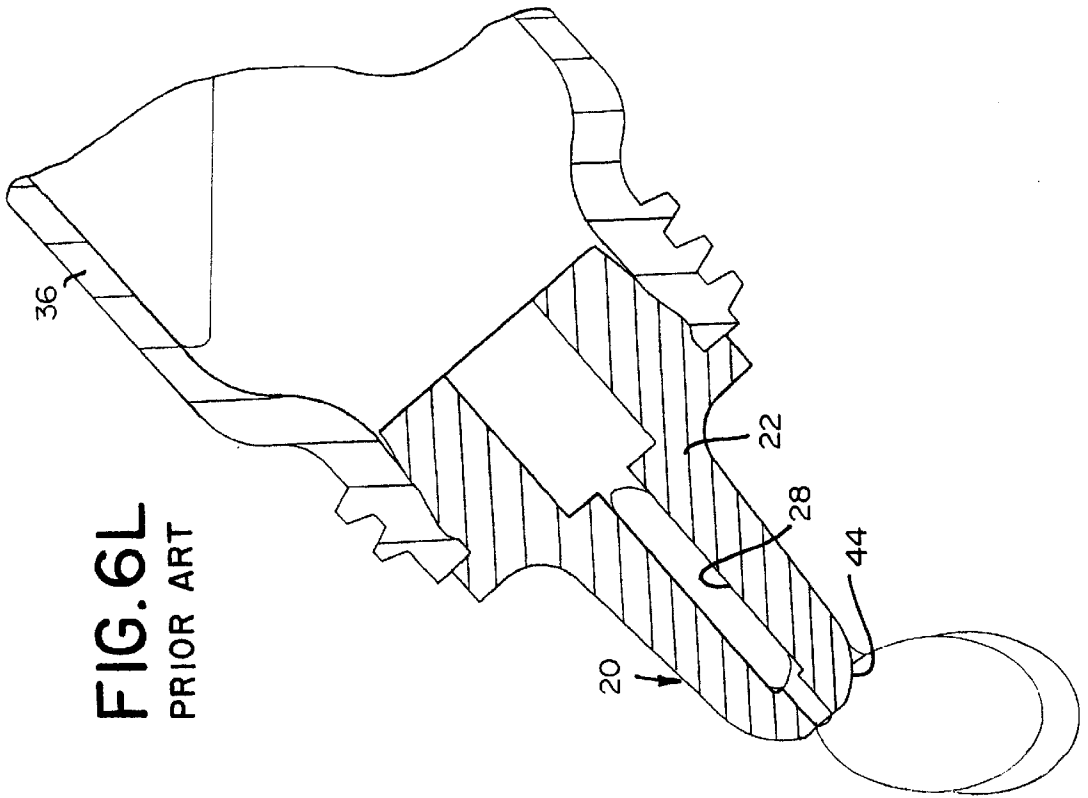


FIG. 6L
PRIOR ART

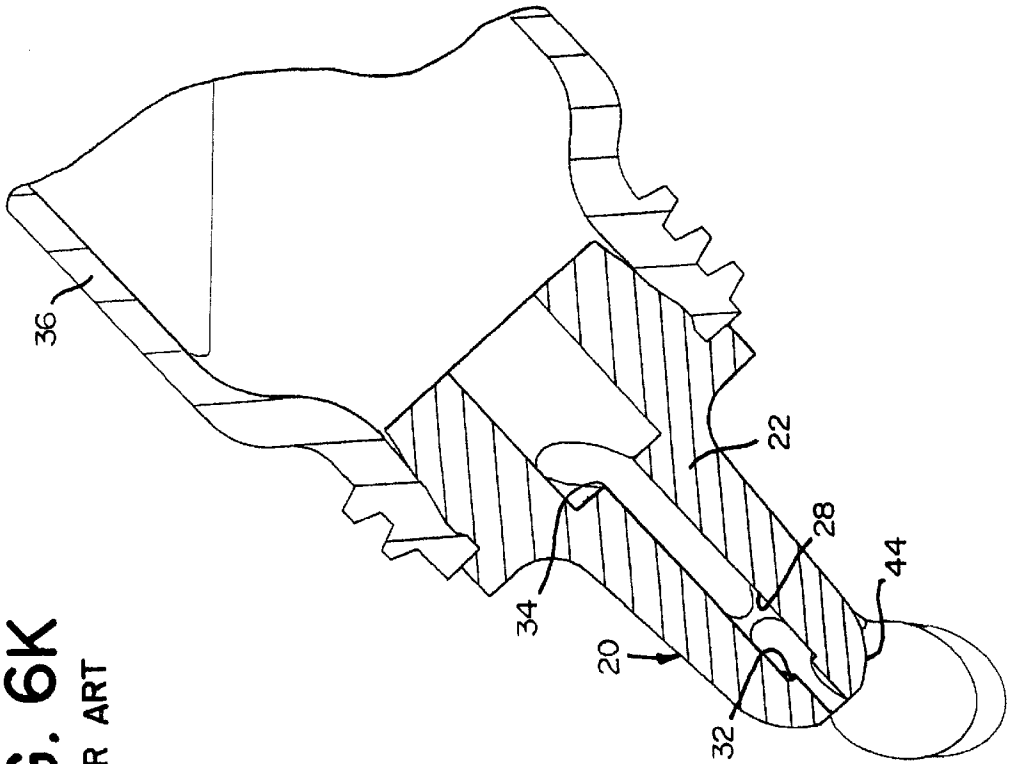
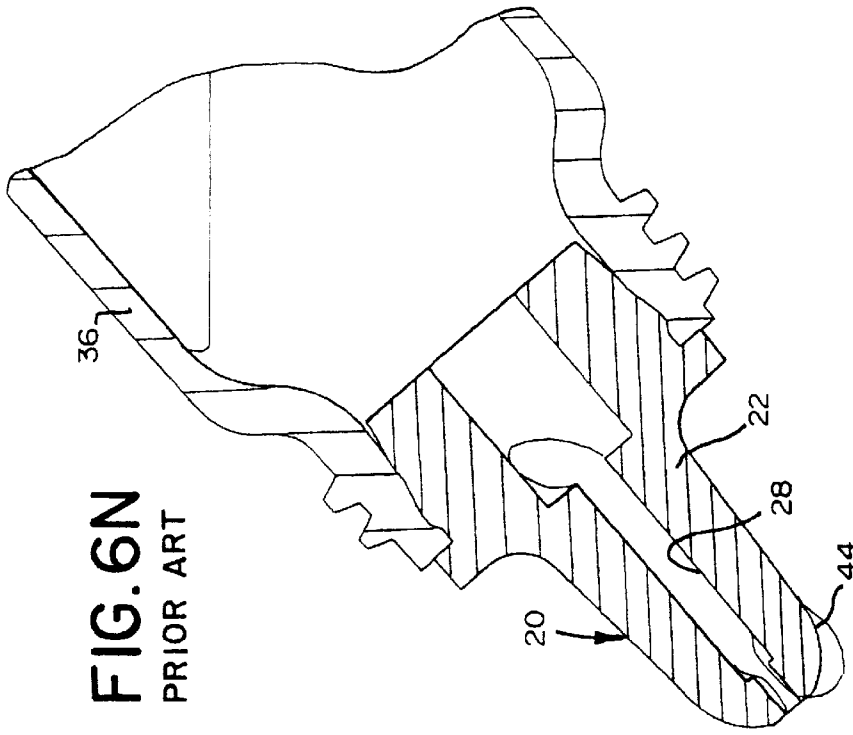
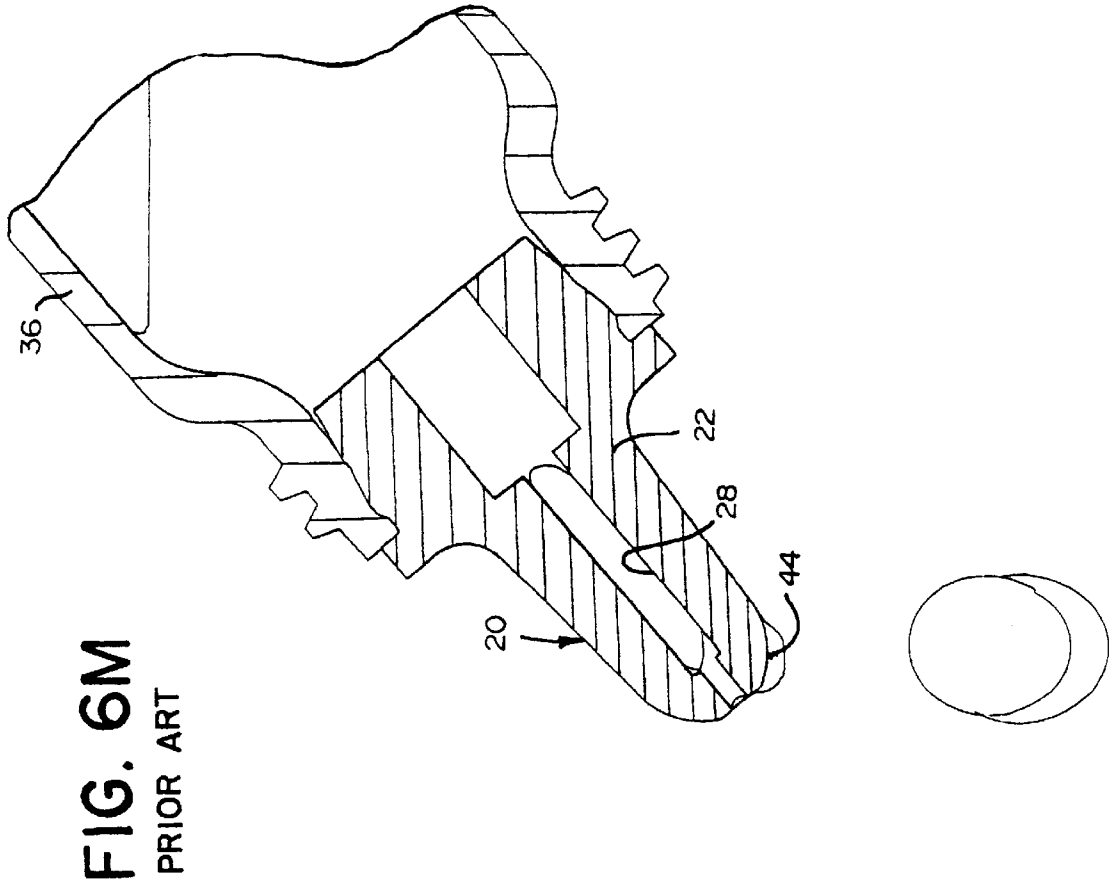
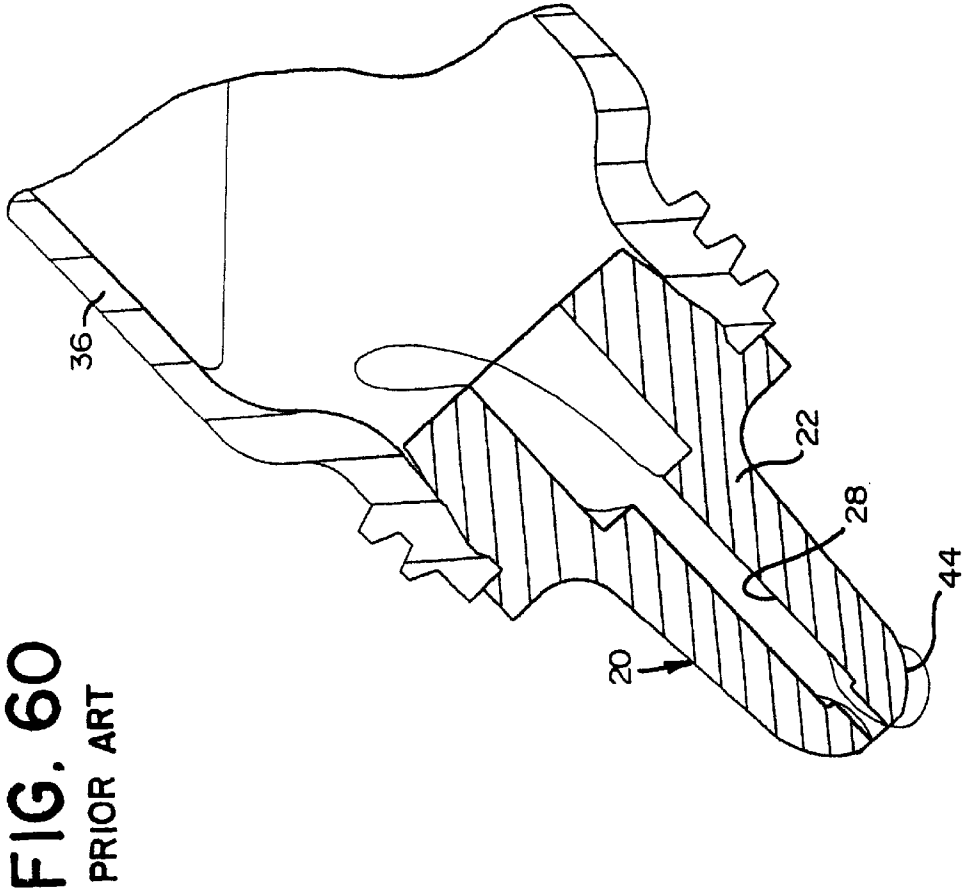
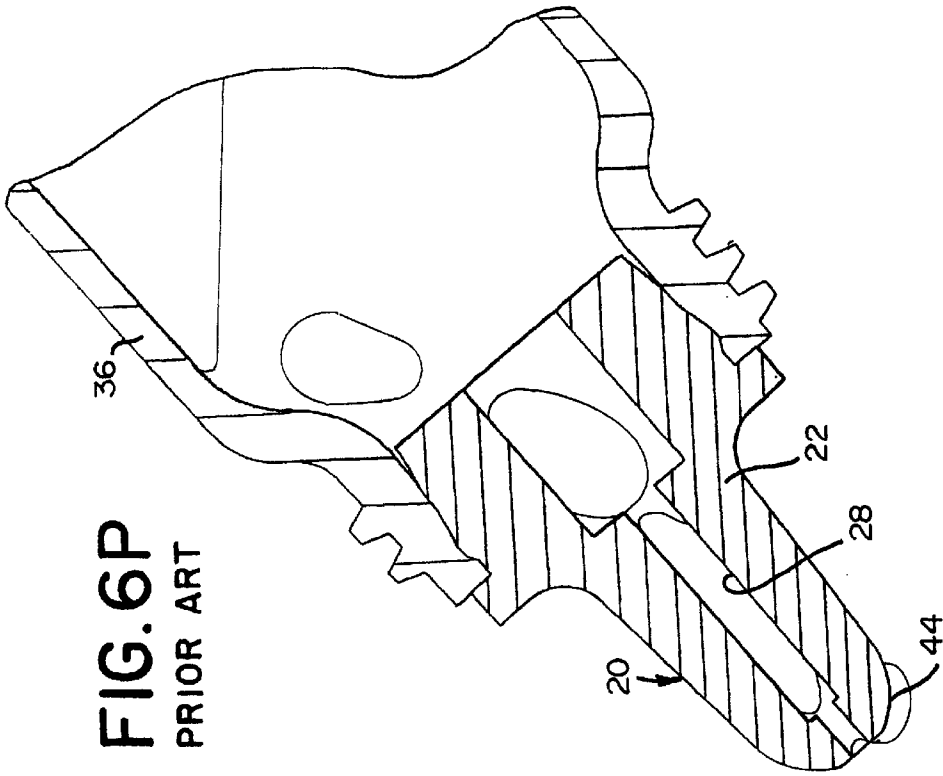


FIG. 6K
PRIOR ART





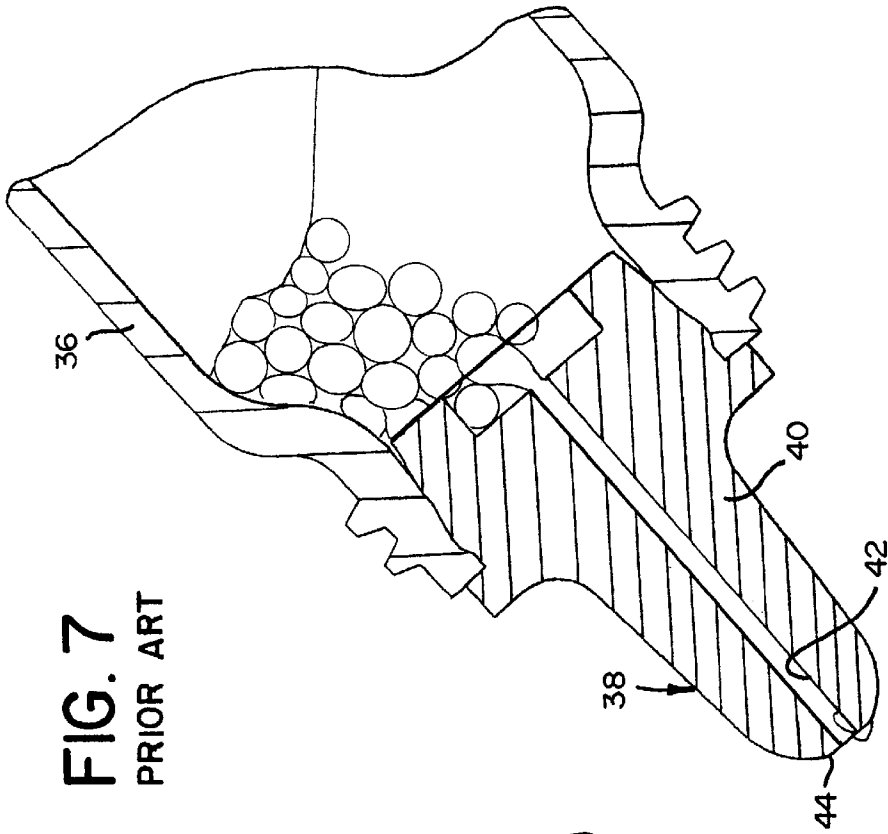


FIG. 7
PRIOR ART

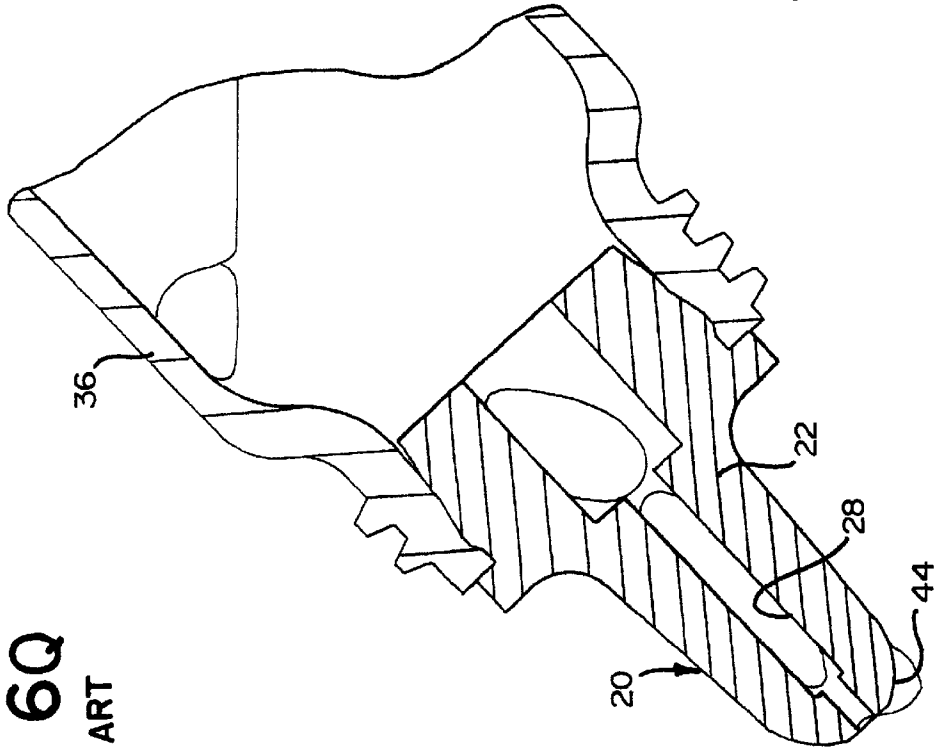


FIG. 6Q
PRIOR ART

NON-BUBBLE FORMING DROPPER TIP**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

This invention is generally directed to a novel non-bubble forming dropper tip which is used to dispense fluids, such as medications and the like. More particularly, the invention contemplates a novel multiple-use dropper tip which is designed to control air bubble development and drop size when the occasional bubble is encountered while dispensing viscous, low density, often thixotropic fluids, such as liquid eye medications or the like.

In order to allow less frequent user applications and reduced rate of absorption by the body, medications for the eye are increasingly being formulated to provide sustained release into the eye. Viscous high film strength carrier vehicles used to deliver these medications can make uniform dose delivery by means of common, prior art dropper bottles difficult. These medications may be highly disposed to inadvertent generation of air bubbles, which in turn accumulate at the meniscus or even trap within the fluid body. These bubbles are often very reluctant to disperse once they have been formed.

A depiction of dispensing drops from a prior art dropper tip **20** is shown in FIGS. **6A-6Q**. The dropper tip **20** is formed from a body **22** having an inner wall **24** which defines a conduit therethrough. The conduit is formed from a first cylindrical wall portion **26**, which is connected to a larger diameter second cylindrical wall portion **28**, which is connected to an even larger diameter third cylindrical wall portion **30**. The transition between the first and second wall portions **26, 28** is not smooth and a sharp shoulder **32** is provided. Likewise, the transition between the second and third wall portions **28, 30** is not smooth and a sharp shoulder **34** is provided.

Bubble generation most often occurs during the aspiration phase of dispensing when the make-up air drives fluid back down the dropper tip **20** into the container **36**. As is shown in FIGS. **6A-6Q**, air returning quickly back down the conduit and encountering the sharp shoulders **32, 34** of the smaller-to-larger diameter transitions can cause bubbles to be formed if a film bridges across this transition edge resulting in a film covered aperture upon which the inrushing air will cause bubbles to be blown. Bubbles must be kept from blocking outward fluid flow paths where the bubbles can become entrained in the fluid and impair accurate drop formation.

A second prior art dropper tip **38** is shown in FIG. **7**. This dropper tip **38** is formed from a body **40** having an inner wall **42** which defines a conduit therethrough. The conduit is straight and has a small diameter.

Conduit diameter is also important in controlling bubbles. A conduit which has a diameter that is too small will exhibit jetting and bubbling aspiration as shown in the prior art dropper tip **38** shown in FIG. **7**.

Moreover, in each of these prior art dropper tips **20, 38**, the delivery tip surface **44** is rounded. The rounded surface **44** encourages the attachment of fluid thereto which can interfere with proper drop size, see FIGS. **6A-6Q**.

The present invention provides a novel dropper tip structure which overcomes these problems and presents other features and advantages over the prior art which will become apparent upon a reading of the attached specification, in combination with an examination of the drawings.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A general object of the present invention is to provide a novel multiple-use dropper tip which is designed to control

air bubble development and drop size when the occasional bubble is encountered while dispensing viscous, low density, often thixotropic fluids, such as liquid eye medications or the like.

An object of the present invention is to provide a novel dropper tip having a delivery tip which controls drop size to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from the dropper tip.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a novel dropper tip having a delivery tip which discourages fluid wetting and migration beyond the designated perimeter of the delivery tip.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a novel dropper tip having an inner wall which discourages fluid wetting thereof.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a novel dropper tip having an inner wall defining a conduit which is designed to encourage fluid detachment from the inner wall whenever the fluid is caused to flow away from the delivery tip back toward the container, such as after drops have been dispensed and the squeezed container has been released to aspirate make-up air.

Yet a further object of the present invention is to provide a novel closure cap for sealing the dropper tip of the present invention.

Briefly, and in accordance with the foregoing, the present invention discloses a multiple-use dropper tip which is designed to control air bubble development and drop size when bubbles are encountered while dispensing fluids, such as liquid eye medications or the like. The dropper tip is connected to a squeezable container having the fluid therein and is used to dispense the fluid therefrom in a controlled manner.

The dropper tip is formed from a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough. The inner wall smoothly diverges and gradually increases in inner diameter from the first end to the second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being trapped along the inner wall. That is to say, the inner wall defining the conduit does not have any sharp corners or steps therein upon which fluid could bridge and form bubbles. The body inner wall is highly polished and may be made of olefinic material, silicone rubber material, or fluorocarbons, including, but not limited to, polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), carbon tetrafluoroethylene (CTFE), fluoroethylene propylene (FEP) or the like, to resist fluid wetting, facilitate fluid detachment therefrom and to reduce fluid film thickness therealong. The surface of the inner wall is smoothed to minimize surface roughness. A tubular portion having a flat end is provided at the first end of the body to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from the dropper tip. A sharp outer perimeter edge is provided by the flat end to provide an instant transition to discourage fluid wetting and migration beyond the designated perimeter of the flat end.

A novel closure cap is provided for sealing the dropper tip of the present invention. The closure cap seals the dropper tip at two places to prevent the entrance of contaminants therein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The organization and manner of the structure and operation of the invention, together with further objects and advantages thereof, may best be understood by reference to the following description, taken in connection with the

accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals identify like elements in which:

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view of a novel dropper tip which incorporates the features of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container which is shown partially in cross-section;

FIG. 3 is a top elevational view of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1;

FIGS. 4A–4G are cross-sectional views of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a first drop formation and release;

FIGS. 4H–4J are cross-sectional views of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a first aspiration and bubble “parking”;

FIGS. 4K and 4L are cross-sectional views of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing the bubble at rest;

FIGS. 4M–4P are cross-sectional views of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, a second drop formation and release;

FIGS. 4Q and 4R are cross-sectional views of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a second aspiration;

FIGS. 4S and 4T are cross-sectional views of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing the bubbles at rest with successive bubbles joining together to form a single bubble;

FIGS. 4U–4W are cross-sectional views of the dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a large bubble migration into the container;

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of a novel closure cap secured to the container to which the novel dropper tip shown in FIG. 1 is attached;

FIGS. 6A–6F are cross-sectional views of a prior art dropper tip attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a first drop formation and release;

FIGS. 6G–6H are cross-sectional views of the prior art dropper tip attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a first aspiration and air trapping;

FIG. 6I is a cross-sectional view of the prior art dropper tip attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing the bubbles at rest;

FIGS. 6J–6M are cross-sectional views of the prior art dropper tip attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a second drop formation with attached bubble due to trapped air;

FIGS. 6N and 6O are cross-sectional views of the prior art dropper tip attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a second aspiration and air trapping;

FIGS. 6P and 6Q are cross-sectional views of the prior art dropper tip attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing a small bubble release into the container; and

FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of another prior art dropper tip attached to a container, which is shown partially in cross-section, showing an aspiration and bubble formation of a small inner diameter conduit.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATED EMBODIMENT

While the invention may be susceptible to embodiment in different forms, there is shown in the drawings, and herein

will be described in detail, a specific embodiment with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered an exemplification of the principles of the invention, and is not intended to limit the invention to that as illustrated and described herein.

As shown in the drawings, the present invention provides a multiple-use dropper tip **50** which is designed to control air bubble development and drop size when the occasional bubble is encountered while dispensing viscous, low density, often thixotropic fluids, such as liquid eye medications or the like. The dropper tip **50** is connected to a conventional squeezable plastic container **52** having the fluid therein and is used to dispense the fluid therefrom.

The squeezable plastic container **52** is formed from a body **53** having an open mouth **55** and an opposite closed end (not shown). Threads **57** are provided proximate to the mouth **55** of the container **52** on the exterior of the body **53**.

The dropper tip **50** is formed from a body **54** having first and second opposite ends **56**, **58** and an inner wall **60** defining a conduit therethrough. The inner wall **60** provided through the body **54** smoothly diverges and gradually increases in inner diameter from the first end **56** to the second end **58** such that air bubbles are prevented from being trapped along the inner wall **60**. Because of this novel structure, sharp corners, sharp edges or pockets along the length of the inner wall **60** on which air bubbles could catch as can occur in the prior art, are eliminated in the present invention. In addition, the elimination of sharp corners, edges and pockets along the inner wall **60** help prevent the break-up of large bubbles into smaller ones and this elimination does not leave a place for bubbles to attach and re-enter the fluid flow during the next dispensing.

The exterior surface of the body **54** generally follows the shape of the inner wall **60**. Structure **62** is provided at the second end **58** of the body **54** along the exterior thereof for releasably attaching the body **54** within the open mouth **55** of the container **52**. A circular shoulder **59** is provided on the exterior of the body **54** at a predetermined distance from the second end **58** of the body **54** and proximate to the structure **62** for reasons described herein.

A tubular delivery tip **64** having a flat end surface **66** is provided at the first end **56** of the body **54**. The flat end surface **66** of the delivery tip **64** controls drop size by providing an end flat of finite frontal area to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from the novel dropper tip **50** of the present invention. The tubular delivery tip **64** defines a cylindrical wall portion **68** of the inner wall **60**. As shown in the drawings, the wall portion **68** is generally cylindrical, however, it is to be understood that the wall portion **68** may gradually diverge from its first end to its second end. The outer perimeter of the flat end surface **66** provides a sharp perimeter edge **70** to provide an instant transition to discourage fluid wetting and migration beyond the designated perimeter of the flat end surface **66**.

In prior art dropper tips, designers often utilize the final outlet passageway diameter as a control feature to attempt to limit drop size. This has more impact in dispensing from totally upside down than the more traditional 45° dispensing, but it is used. In general, a smaller bore yields a smaller drop at 90°. With the high viscosity, low density materials as used in the present invention, a small bore will aggravate jetting, bubble forming and trapping. The flat end surface **66** which promotes limited momentary attachment of the fluid, makes reliance upon small passageways unnecessary for drop size control and eliminates the penalties of a small passageway.

The delivery tip **64** is supplied by means of the internal conduit formed by the inner wall **60** which conducts fluid, such as medication, from the interior of the affixed squeezable container **52** to the delivery tip flat end surface **66**. The inner wall **60** is designed and manufactured in a manner to discourage fluid wetting thereof. In addition, the inner wall **66** is designed to encourage fluid detachment therefrom whenever the fluid is caused to flow away from the delivery tip **64** back toward the container **52**, such as after drops have been dispensed and the squeezed container **52** has been released to aspirate make-up air.

The inner wall **60** further includes a first wall portion **72** having first and second opposite ends, a second wall portion **74** having first and second opposite ends, a third wall portion **76** having first and second opposite ends, and a fourth wall portion **78** having first and second opposite ends. The first end of the first wall portion **72** smoothly transitions with the second end of the cylindrical wall portion **68**. The second end of the first wall portion **72** smoothly transitions with the first end of the second wall portion **74**. The second end of the second wall portion **74** smoothly transitions with the first end of the third wall portion **76**. The second end of the third wall portion **76** smoothly transitions with the first end of the fourth wall portion **78**. The transition walls **72**, **76** between the respective wall sections **68**, **74**, **78** are curved or arcuate and devoid of sharp corners.

The first wall portion **72** is radiused to provide a smooth transition from the second end of the cylindrical wall portion **68** to the first end of the second wall portion **74**. The inner diameter of the first wall portion **72** at its first end is equal to the inner diameter of the cylindrical wall portion **68** at its second end. The inner diameter of the first wall portion **72** at its first end is smaller than at its second end.

The second wall portion **74** gradually diverges from its first end to its second end such that the inner diameter at its second end is greater than the inner diameter at its first end. The inner diameter of the second wall portion **74** at its first end is equal to the inner diameter of the first wall portion **72** at its second end.

The third wall portion **76** is radiused to provide a smooth transition from the second end of the second wall portion **74** to the first end of the fourth wall portion **78**. The inner diameter of the third wall portion **76** at its first end is equal to the inner diameter of the second wall portion **74** at its second end. The inner diameter of the third wall portion **76** at its first end is smaller than at its second end.

The fourth wall portion **78** gradually diverges from its first end to its second end such that the inner diameter at its second end is greater than the inner diameter at its first end. The inner diameter of the fourth wall portion **78** at its first end is equal to the inner diameter of the third wall portion **76** at its second end.

Bubble generation most often occurs during the aspiration phase of dispensing when the make-up air is sucked or drawn back into the container **52**, as the wall of the container **52** is released and its inherent resiliency causes it to expand back to its original form or shape. When aspiration occurs, it tends to drive fluid back down the dropper tip **50** into the container **52**. As is shown in the prior art in FIGS. 6A-6Q, air returning quickly back down the conduit and encountering sharp back side edges of any smaller-to-larger inner diameter transitions can cause bubbles to be formed if a film bridges across this transition edge resulting in a film covered aperture upon which the intruding air will cause bubbles to be blown.

The dropper tip **50** of the present invention incorporates several structural features to reduce incidences of film

forming. The generously radiused wall portions **72**, **76** reduce incidences of film forming. The surface of the inner wall **60** may be highly polished and/or may be materially resistant to wetting by the fluid to improve detachment of fluid from the inner wall **60** and/or minimize impeding of the fluids retreat as incoming air forces fluid back into the container **52** during aspiration. The resultant ease of flow prevents or minimizes fluid thickness along the inner wall **60** which, in turn, inhibits bridge conditions which could lead to film bridging across the conduit. The provision of highly polished surfaces and/or use of surface materials resist fluid wetting, facilitate fluid detachment and reduce fluid film thickness along the inner wall **60**. These also help to create a condition during aspiration that is inhospitable to the bubble forming process. This provides a benefit when downstream, area increasing steps within the conduit must be accommodated and its serves to prevent a washing wall of fluid from flowing and closing around the back side of the returning air flow resulting in a trapped air bubble within the returning slug of fluid.

It has been found that providing an inner wall surface of highly polished (S.P.I.-S.P.E. #1 mirror finish) olefinic material, such as DUPONT Grade 20 high density polyethylene (HDPE) or HUNTSMAN Grade 13R9A polypropylene (PP), or silicone rubber material, such as NuSIL Grade 4980 silicone rubber, provide a good passageway to resist bubble formation. To form the inner wall **60** of this material, the body **54** is also formed out of this material. A finely polished surface has less net surface area than a rougher finish. A fine surface finish also offers much shallower irregularities (but potentially many more on a microscopic level). These minute irregularities can trap air which suspends fluid and further reduces its contact with the surface. A rough surface can serve to place more surface area in contact, thereby allowing a film of fluid to puddle, cling, trap and resist flowing off. Surface roughness, regardless of material choice, may have the effect of providing microscopic shelves on which fluid can cling, thereby increasing the overall depth of fluid flow washing the inner wall, inhibiting detachment and slowing the return of the flow during aspiration. The surface of the inner wall **60** is made as smooth as possible in order to optimize resistance to bubble formation by minimizing the volume of fluid available to close behind the intruding make-up air. The mold on which the dropper tip **50** is formed is polished to a mirror finish to make the surface of the inner wall **60** smooth when the body **54** is molded out of the chosen material. Surface material, such as TEFLON® (polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), carbon tetrafluoroethylene (CTFE), fluoroethylene propylene (FEP) or the like) or other fluorocarbons as a family, can be provided on the inner wall **60** or surface modifications to reduce surface wettability also provide a good passageway to resist bubble formation.

The critical surface tension of some of the materials disclosed herein are as follows:

PTFE	18 dynes/cm
FEP	16 dynes/cm
Silicone	24 dynes/cm
PE	31 dynes/cm
PP	29 dynes/cm

The surface tension of some liquids are as follows:

glycerol	63 dynes/cm
silicone oils	21 dynes/cm
water	73 dynes/cm

Wetting will occur when the surface tension of the liquid is lower than the critical surface tension of the inner wall. If the surface tension of the liquid is higher than the critical surface tension of the inner wall, the liquid will form a round droplet on the inner wall. Therefore, in the present invention, a material with a lower critical surface tension than the surface tension of the fluid is used. For example, PE (critical surface tension of 31 dynes/cm) works very well with the water based solution which can be dispensed from the present dropper tip **50**. If silicone oil (surface tension of 21 dynes/cm) is used, PTFE (critical surface tension of 18 dynes/cm) or FEP (critical surface tension of 16 dynes/cm) might be used. Fluorocarbon materials provide very good critical surface tension values.

The diverging inner wall **60** cross-section assists the non-wetting process by providing space separation between opposing points on the inner wall **60** and by causing the downwashing surface fluid to spread and thin over a constantly increasing circumferential surface.

The size of the conduit is also important in controlling bubbles. As is shown in the prior art in FIG. 7, a conduit which is too small will exhibit jetting and bubbling aspiration. The conduit defined by the inner wall **60** of the present invention, which has larger passages having generously radiused wall portions **72**, **76**, is very smooth and has divergent walls **74**, **78**, reduces or eliminates adverse impacts of bubble formation. The dropper tip **50** of the present invention provides a safe place to "park" the inevitable bubble such that the bubble will not re-enter into outward flow during dispensing as is shown in the extreme example in FIGS. 4A-4W.

It should also be noted that in FIGS. 4Q-4T, because the body **54** has at least one enlarged diameter wall portion, an air bubble can momentarily become entrained in the fluid, but the novel shape of the conduit **60** prevents permanent occlusion of the air bubble within the dispensed fluid, see FIGS. 4U-4W. In addition, because of the novel shape of the conduit **60**, an air bubble can momentarily occlude the conduit passageway, but the novel shape of the conduit **60** prevents permanent occlusion of the conduit passageway.

The Applicant has found that fluid drops dispensed from this dropper tip **50** have been shown to be reasonably consistent in size for a given fluid. It has also been found that the presence of an occasional bubble of entrained air has been shown to have much less impact upon actual drop fluid volume than would be seen with a more traditional spherical dropper tip. Delivered drops from this structure have been found to be in the acceptable range of 25±5 microlitre size.

Attention is now directed to FIG. 5 which shows a novel closure cap **80** for sealing the dropper tip **50**. Before a description of this novel closure cap **80** is provided, a description of how a prior art closure cap (not shown) would attach to the dropper tip **50** of the present invention is provided, along with the disadvantages created when a prior art closure cap is used with the novel dropper tip **50** of the present invention. Prior art closure caps provide two seals for sealing a dropper tip. When a prior art closure cap is provided on the novel dropper tip **50** of the present invention, the closure cap bears on the flat end surface **66** of

the delivery tip **64** to form a first seal for preventing accumulation of liquid within the closure cap and the closure cap bears on the top of the dropper tip circular shoulder **57** to form a second seal for preventing contaminants from entering into the dropper tip **50** and to seal the dropper tip **50** to the container **52**. The Applicant has found that a problem arises when such a prior art closure cap is used on the dropper tip **50** of the present invention. When the prior art closure cap is secured to the dropper tip, the cylindrical delivery tip **64** will deform as a result of the compression applied by the prior art closure cap to perfect the first seal. This causes the wall of the cylindrical delivery tip **64** to diverge outwardly and deform. This obviously is not desirable.

The novel closure cap **80** shown in FIG. 5 was developed to overcome this problem created by the prior art closure cap. The closure cap **80** is formed from a body **82** which includes a wall **84** which diverges outwardly from its first end to its second end. An end wall **86** closes the first end of the wall **84** and is angled relative to the wall **84**. A circular wall **88** extends outwardly from the second end of the wall **84** and is angled relative to the wall **84**. Walls **86** and **88** are parallel to each other. A depending circular skirt wall **90** extends from the outermost end of the wall **88** and is approximately perpendicular thereto. A circular shoulder **92** is formed between end wall **86** and outwardly diverging wall **84**. The shoulder **92** has a curved surface **94** at its innermost point. A recess **96** is formed within the walls **84**, **86**, **88**, **90** with one end of the recess **96** being closed by end wall **86** and the other end of the recess **96** being open. The area of the recess **96** between the shoulder **92** and end wall **86** is defined as a cap pocket. A plurality of threads **98** are provided on the interior of the wall **90** for mating with threads **57** on the container **52**.

When the closure cap **80** of the present invention is secured to the container **52** and the dropper tip **50**, the end wall **86** bears against the end flat **66** of the delivery tip **64**. The delivery tip **64** seats within the cap pocket. The curved surface **94** bears against the curved exterior surface **100** of the body **54** proximate to the first wall portion **72**. The interior of wall **88** bears against the top surface of the shoulder **59**. The threads **98** are engaged with the threads **57** on the container **52**.

The bearing of the curved surface **94** against the curved exterior surface **100** of the body **54** proximate to the first wall portion **72** forms the primary seal for preventing accumulation of liquid within the closure cap **80** and places the main compression load on the dropper tip **50** radius, instead of on the cylindrical delivery tip **64** as occurs with the prior art closure cap. The cylindrical delivery tip **64** of the dropper tip **50** is lightly crushed (0.002"-0.005") within the cap pocket enough to seal against the end wall **86** inner surface, but not deform the cylindrical delivery tip **64**. The bearing of the interior of the wall **88** against the top surface of the shoulder **59** forms the secondary seal for preventing contaminants from entering into the dropper tip **50** and to seal the dropper tip **50** to the container **52**.

While a preferred embodiment of the present invention is shown and described, it is envisioned that those skilled in the art may devise various modifications of the present invention without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. A dropper tip which is adapted to be connected to a container for dispensing fluid from the container, said dropper tip comprising: a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough, said

inner wall including a plurality of first wall portions and a plurality of second wall portions, each said first wall portion being radiused and being connected to at least one of said second wall portions, said inner wall smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped within said dropper tip.

2. A dropper tip as defined in claim 1, wherein each said second wall portion diverges.

3. A dropper tip as defined in claim 1, wherein said conduit increases in inner diameter from said first end to said second end.

4. A dropper tip as defined in claim 1, wherein said inner wall gradually diverges from said first end to said second end.

5. A dropper tip as defined in claim 1, wherein said body includes means for attaching said body to the container.

6. A dropper tip as defined in claim 1, wherein said first end of said body has a flat end surface to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from said dropper tip.

7. A dropper tip as defined in claim 6, wherein said flat end surface defines a sharp perimeter edge.

8. A dropper tip as defined in claim 1, wherein said inner wall is formed of a material which resists fluid wetting.

9. A dropper tip as defined in claim 8, wherein said inner wall is made of a fluorocarbon material.

10. A dropper tip as defined in claim 9, wherein said fluorocarbon material is selected from the group consisting of polytetrafluoroethylene, carbon tetrafluoroethylene or fluoroethylene propylene.

11. A dropper tip as defined in claim 8, wherein said inner wall is highly polished to resist fluid wetting, facilitate fluid detachment therefrom and to reduce fluid film thickness therealong.

12. A dropper tip as defined in claim 11, wherein said inner wall is made of an olefinic material.

13. A dropper tip as defined in claim 12, wherein said olefinic material is selected from the group consisting of high density polyethylene or polypropylene.

14. A dropper tip as defined in claim 13, wherein said inner wall is made of silicone rubber material.

15. A dropper tip as defined in claim 8, wherein the surface tension of the liquid is higher than the critical surface tension of the inner wall.

16. A dropper tip as defined in claim 1, wherein the surface of said inner wall is smoothed to minimize surface roughness.

17. A dropper tip which is adapted to be connected to a container for dispensing fluid from the container, said dropper tip comprising: a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough, said inner wall being formed from a first wall portion having first and second opposite ends and gradually diverging in diameter from said first end to said second end, a second wall portion having first and second opposite ends, and a third wall portion having first and second opposite ends and gradually diverging in diameter from said first end to said second end, said second end of said first wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said second wall portion, and said second end of said second wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said third wall portion, said first wall portion having an inner diameter at its second end which is smaller than an inner diameter of said third wall portion at its first end, said second wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first wall portion to said third wall portion, said inner wall

smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped within said dropper tip.

18. A dropper tip as defined in claim 17, wherein said first end of said body has a flat end surface to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from said dropper tip.

19. A dropper tip as defined in claim 18, wherein said flat end surface defines a sharp perimeter edge.

20. A dropper tip which is adapted to be connected to a container for dispensing fluid from the container, said dropper tip comprising: a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough, said inner wall being formed from a first wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends, a second wall portion having first and second opposite ends, and a third wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends, said second end of said first wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said second wall portion, and said second end of said second wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said third wall portion, said inner dimension of said first wall portion being smaller than said inner dimension of said third wall portion, said second wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first wall portion to said third wall portion, said inner wall smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped within said dropper tip, said first wall portion gradually diverging from said first end to said second end and said third wall portion gradually diverging from said first end to said second end, the inner dimension of said first wall portion at said second end being smaller than the inner dimension of said third wall portion at its first end, and a fourth wall portion having opposite first and second ends, said second end of said fourth wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said first wall portion, said fourth wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first end of said body to said first end of said first wall portion.

21. A dropper tip as defined in claim 20, wherein the diameter of said fourth wall portion at its first end is smaller than at its second end.

22. A dropper tip which is adapted to be connected to a container for dispensing fluid from the container, said dropper tip comprising: a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough, said inner wall is formed of a material which resists fluid wetting and which has a critical surface tension equal to or less than 31 dynes/cm, and said inner wall smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped along said inner wall, said inner wall being formed from a first wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends, a second wall portion having first and second opposite ends, and a third wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends said second end of said first wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said second wall portion, and said second end of said second wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said third wall portion, said inner dimension of said first wall portion being smaller than said inner dimension of said third wall portion, said second wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first wall portion to said third wall portion, said inner wall smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are

prevented from being permanently trapped within said dropper tip, said first wall portion gradually diverging from said first end to said second end and said third wall portion gradually diverging from said first end to said second end, the diameter of said first wall portion said second end being smaller than the diameter of said third wall portion at its first end.

23. A dropper tip as defined in claim 22, wherein said inner wall is made of a fluorocarbon material.

24. A dropper tip as defined in claim 23, wherein said fluorocarbon material is selected from the group consisting of polytetrafluoroethylene, carbon tetrafluoroethylene or fluoroethylene propylene.

25. A dropper tip as defined in claim 22, wherein said inner wall is highly polished to resist fluid wetting, facilitate fluid detachment therefrom and to reduce fluid film thickness therealong.

26. A dropper tip as defined in claim 25, wherein said inner wall is made of an olefinic material.

27. A dropper tip as defined in claim 26, wherein said olefinic material is selected from the group consisting of high density polyethylene or polypropylene.

28. A dropper tip as defined in claim 25, wherein said inner wall is made of silicone rubber material.

29. A dropper tip as defined in claim 22, wherein the surface of said inner wall is smoothed to minimize surface roughness.

30. A dropper tip as defined in claim 22, wherein said inner wall gradually diverges from said first end to said second end.

31. A dropper tip as defined in claim 22, wherein the surface tension of the liquid is higher than the critical surface tension of the inner wall.

32. A dropper tip as defined in claim 22, wherein said first end of said body has a flat end surface to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from said dropper tip.

33. A dropper tip as defined in claim 32, wherein said flat end surface defines a sharp perimeter edge.

34. A dropper tip which is adapted to be connected to a container for dispensing fluid from the container, said dropper tip comprising: a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough, said inner wall is formed of a material which resists fluid wetting, and said inner wall smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped along said inner wall, said inner wall being formed from a first wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends, a second wall portion having first and second opposite ends, and a third wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends, said second end of said first wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said second wall portion, said second end of said second wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said third wall portion, said inner dimension of said first wall portion being smaller than said inner dimension of said third wall portion, said second wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first wall portion to said third wall portion, said inner wall smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped within said dropper tip, and said first wall portion gradually diverging from said first end to said second end and said third wall portion gradually diverging from said first end to said second end, the dimension of said first wall portion at said second end being smaller than the dimension

of said third wall portion at its first end, and a fourth wall portion having opposite first and second ends, said second end of said fourth wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said first wall portion, said fourth wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first end of said body to said first end of said first wall portion.

35. A dropper tip as defined in claim 34, wherein the diameter of said fourth wall portion at its first end is smaller than at its second end.

36. A dropper tip which is adapted to be connected to a container for dispensing fluid from the container, said dropper tip comprising: a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough for the passage of fluid therethrough, said first end of said body having a flat end surface to promote limited momentary attachment of fluid thereto when fluid is being dispensed from said dropper tip, said inner wall being formed from a first wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends, a second wall portion having first and second opposite ends, a third wall portion having a predetermined inner dimension and first and second opposite ends, said second end of said first wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said second wall portion, and said second end of said second wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said third wall portion, said inner dimension of said first wall portion being smaller than said inner dimension of said third wall portion, said second wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first wall portion to said third wall portion, said first wall portion gradually diverges from said first end to said second end and said third wall portion gradually diverges from said first end to said second end, the dimension of said first wall portion at said second end being smaller than the dimension of said third wall portion at its first end, and a fourth wall portion having opposite first and second ends, said second end of said fourth wall portion smoothly transitioning with said first end of said first wall portion, said fourth wall portion being radiused to smoothly transition said conduit from said first end of said body to said first end of said first wall portion.

37. A dropper tip as defined in claim 36, wherein the diameter of said fourth wall portion at its first end is smaller than at its second end.

38. In combination, a dropper tip, a container and a cap, comprising: said dropper tip comprising a body having first and second opposite ends and an inner wall defining a conduit therethrough, said inner wall including a plurality of first wall portions and a plurality of second wall portions, each said first wall portion being radiused and being connected to at least one of said second wall portions, said inner wall smoothly transitioning from said first end to said second end such that air bubbles are prevented from being permanently trapped within said dropper tip, said dropper tip being engaged with said container; said container comprising a body; and said cap comprising a body having first sealing means for bearing against one of said first wall portions of said dropper tip to seal said first end of said dropper tip.

39. The combination as defined in claim 38, wherein said dropper tip includes a cylindrical projection on an end thereof and one of said first wall portions is connected to said cylindrical projection, said cylindrical projection being seated within a recess provided in said cap when said cap is mated with said container, said first sealing means bearing against said dropper tip proximate to said cylindrical projection.

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40. The combination as defined in claim **38**, wherein said dropper tip further includes a circular flange projecting outwardly from said body at a predetermined distance from said second end, said body of said cap further having second sealing means for bearing against said flange to seal said dropper tip. 5

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41. The combination as defined in claim **38**, wherein said body of said container has means thereon for engaging said cap, and said body of said cap having means for engaging said means on said container.

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